THE WELLESLEY PAPERS

BY THE EDITOR OF
"THE WINDHAM PAPERS"

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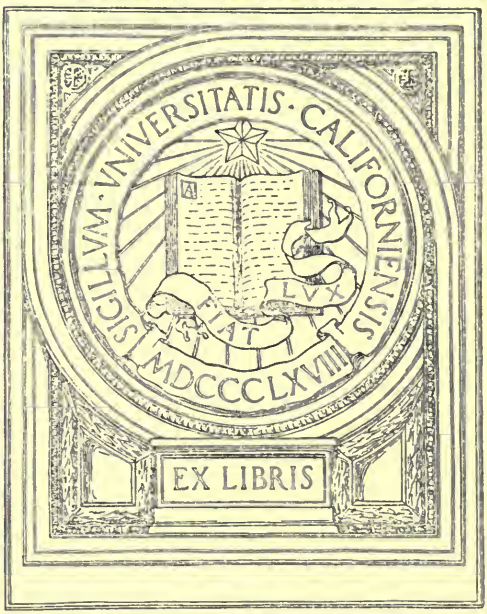

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THE WELLESLEY PAPERS

WE MUST ENDEAVOUR TO DISCHARGE
OUR DUTY TOWARDS OUR COUNTRY
WITH FORTITUDE AND PERSEVERANCE

Wellesley to Wilberforce, January 24th, 1806

The Marquess Wellesley.
From a drawing by Count D'Orsay

THE WELLESLEY PAPERS

THE LIFE AND CORRESPONDENCE OF RICHARD COLLEY WELLESLEY MARQUESS WELLESLEY 1760-1842 GOVERNOR-GENERAL OF INDIA 1797-1805 SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS 1809-1812 AND LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND 1821-1827 1833-1834 INCLUDING HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED CORRESPONDENCE WITH GEORGE III AND GEORGE IV THE DUKES OF YORK AND CUMBERLAND THE DUKES OF PORTLAND AND WELLINGTON LORDS ABERDEEN AUCKLAND BATHURST BROUGHAM CASTLEREAGH GREY HOLLAND LIVERPOOL MELBOURNE AND PALMERSTON LADY HESTER STANHOPE AND LADY BLESSINGTON BURDETT CANNING CREEVEY CROKER PEEL SPENCER PERCEVAL PITT WILBERFORCE ETC ETC

BY THE EDITOR OF

"THE WINDHAM PAPERS"

IN TWO VOLUMES

VOLUME TWO

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BOOK V

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS. 1809-1812

BOOK V

SECRETARY OF STATE FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS
December 1809 to January 1812

CHAPTER II

The Ministerial position at home : Wellesley's suggestions for strengthening the Government : Lord Holland on Wellesley : Overtures to Canning, Castlereagh, and Sidmouth : Wellesley on the Peninsula War : His anxiety to strengthen the Cabinet : His offer to make room for Canning : Negotiations : The offer to Castlereagh : Castlereagh declines : Canning's refusal : The King's illness : Wellesley on the general state of Europe : Buonaparte and Prussia : The Regency : Wellesley resigns : His memorandum on the reasons for his resignation.

NOT only was the Ministry weak, but Wellesley was well aware of the fact. The debate on the Walcheren Expedition showed clearly the want of good speakers on the Treasury Benches alike in the Lords and Commons. The success of the vote of censure on the Ministers responsible for this would have had the serious effect of compelling their retirement from Government. Wellesley and Harrowby alone would have been exempt.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* AN UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT

Private and confidential — *Apsley House*
March 13, 1810

It is already admitted that the present Government must seek for additional strength in order to carry on the public business. It has, however, appeared inadvisable to attempt any alteration of the present frame of the Cabinet previously to the issue of the enquiry now depending in the House of Commons.

This delay may be necessary as far as it relates to the conclusion of any actual appointments to offices, but I apprehend that, unless immediate steps be taken for negotiating with those persons whose assistance may be thought useful in strengthening the Government, the very means of forming any Cabinet upon the general basis of the present administration may be destroyed. The resolutions of the House of Commons upon the issue of the depending enquiry may be of such a nature as to disqualify many of the members of the present administration, and some of those whose assistance might be beneficial as an accession to the Cabinet. If such should be the result of the enquiry, no materials will exist for the formation of a Government on the present basis, and the administration must fall into the hands of the opposite party. In order to obviate this mischief, it might be proper to establish without delay an understanding with those persons, whose aid is acknowledged to be requisite,

under any circumstances which can now be expected to arise.

Whatever distribution of offices may be thought necessary for the strength of the Government should be immediately settled, and those persons who are to be introduced into the Cabinet after the result of the enquiry should now be united for the purpose of rendering that result as favourable as possible to the formation of a stronger Government.

These persons should particularly concert the means of mitigating the force of any resolutions which may be proposed in the House of Commons at the close of the enquiry, so as to prevent the possibility of such disqualifications as may be apprehended, unless it be rendered the interest of all parties (excepting the determined opposition) to unite in the formation of a Government on the present basis.

My opinion has long been decided, that no strong or permanent Government can be founded on the present basis, unless it shall comprehend all, or at least a very large proportion, of the parties now denominated: Mr. Canning's, Lord Castlereagh's, and Lord Sidmouth's. I am aware of the difficulty of bringing these persons to act together, and also of the obstacles which might impede a cordial union between some of them and the leading members of the present Cabinet.

But unless a sacrifice can be made of some portion of the personal animosities and prejudices of the hour by those who concur in general political principles, the administration must not

only pass into the hands of the opposite party, but must remain there.

The question, therefore, is, what sacrifices it may be deemed advisable to make for the purpose of averting so great a danger ; and what attempts can be made with any hope of collecting from the three parties already named a sufficient strength to carry on the public business.

The inclination of my opinion is, that if a general resolution were adopted to make those personal sacrifices which the occasion requires, it would not be impracticable to unite a very considerable portion of those whom I have described. For my own part, I am ready with the utmost cheerfulness to make any personal sacrifice for so great and important an object, and to undertake any part which may be assigned to me in such a negotiation.

The advice which I submit is, therefore, that a proper distribution of offices for the formation of a new Cabinet should be immediately settled, and that an attempt should be made to unite Mr. Canning, Lord Castlereagh, and Lord Sidmouth in the present cause. If any of them should decline any reasonable proposition which may be made to them for that purpose, such a conduct would justify the exclusion of the party which may thus have refused to co-operate in the proposed system, and the plan may then be limited, without injustice to the pretensions of that party.

With a view to facilitate the execution of this plan, I am ready, under Mr. Perceval, either to remain without office, and not in the Cabinet, or

to accept the Presidency of the Council ; or I will readily concur in acting in the same manner under any other person whom Mr. Perceval (with my consent and that of our colleagues) may select for the head of the Government ; or generally I am willing to take any post which may be deemed most advantageous for the success of the plan.[1]

Wellesley himself was possessed of very considerable oratorical power, and at times spoke admirably, but such was the nervousness that sometimes overwhelmed him that he was on these occasions physically unable to rise from his seat.

"Lord Wellesley treated Mr. Perceval and other Ministers with magnificent scorn and contempt," Lord Holland has written. "In a subsequent altercation between him and Lord Harrowby in the House of Lords, respecting the differences in Cabinet while he remained among them, his superiority in wit, spirit, vigour, and eloquence was most decisive. Yet when, on Lord Boringdon's motion for an efficient administration, he was expected to vindicate his own motives and conduct, and to explain at large his views of domestic and foreign policy, though he had come down with mighty ostentation, dressed and decorated, as his usage was, for the delivery of a great speech, his nerves failed him entirely, and he allowed the question to go to a division without uttering one word. So universal was the

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 244.

persuasion that he was on that day to outdo himself, and so positive was the expectation of his speaking, that someone, on the Chancellor's return from the House, asked, without the ceremony of previous enquiry whether he had spoken or not: 'What was the style of Lord Wellesley's speech?' 'I think in that of Tacitus,' replied Lord Eldon. He was, indeed, a most *uncertain* speaker in every sense of the word. After studiously announcing his intentions of speaking, and repeating his views and arguments and illustrations in private to friend and foe, he not unfrequently sat silent. When he did rise, it was often doubtful which side he would espouse, what topics he would select, and whether he would treat them with ability and eloquence or lapse into frothy, trite, and unmeaning declamation, or entangle himself in some metaphysical disquisition which he was quite unequal to unravel or expound. His allusions were more classical than apposite, and his language that of a polite scholar even to a fault. His wit was elaborate and far-fetched, but well and neatly executed. He was sometimes illogical, and I have known him pompous, empty, and unsatisfactory. Yet there was a smack, a fancy of greatness, in all he did; and though in his speeches, his manners, and his actions he was very often open to ridicule, those who smiled and even laughed could not despise him."[1]

[1] *Further Memoirs of the Whig Party*, 115.

The policy of the Walcheren Expedition was in the end approved by the House of Commons, but so strong was the feeling against Lord Chatham, who was mainly responsible for it, or at least was held to be so, that he resigned his office of Master of the Ordnance. He was succeeded in May by Lord Mulgrave, who was followed at the Admiralty by Yorke.[1]

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: April 28, 1810

I have heard from Dundas and have seen Lord Melville. Dundas would not go to the Admiralty unless there had been an arrangement of office in view for more strength. I have, therefore, felt that, with the impression with regard to Lord Gambier, I had no choice left but to press it upon Yorke, who has consented to take it.

Dundas and his Scotch friends will not, I think, leave us immediately, but he will not be reconciled to stay long unless we can get more strength.[2]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SPENCER PERCEVAL

Apsley House: May 3, 1810

I have had no opportunity since the late appointments[3] to state to you what I have been able to collect of their first impression. I understand that it is very unfavourable, and so far from

[1] Charles Philip Yorke (1764-1834), entered Parliament in 1790. He was Secretary at War, 1801-1803, and Home Secretary, 1803-1804.

[2] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 272.

[3] The appointments of Mulgrave and Yorke.

any augmentation of strength, that the change is likely to occasion additional weakness. I need not repeat my entire good-will towards Mr. Yorke, my real respect for his character, and my sincere desire to act with him ; but I fear that without further aid the Government will not be able to proceed.

In this state of things I am disposed to think that it might be advisable to consider again the means of obtaining the assistance of Mr. Canning and his friends, and to make a direct proposition to them on such grounds as might be consistent with your honour, and with your continuance at the head of the Treasury.

If such a proposition should be approved, I am ready to make the same sacrifices for its success which I have already offered to you, with a view to a more extended arrangement ; and I wish distinctly to state that I shall be prepared to vacate my office for the purpose of contributing to the accession of strength which might be derived from the introduction of Mr. Canning and his friends into the frame of the Government.

* If a just and reasonable proposition of this nature should be declined by Mr. Canning, embarrassments will be removed which now obstruct other means of strengthening the Government.

I am not authorised to state any positive information on this point, but I think advantage might now be derived from urging it to a clear issue.

(*Pencil note to above*)[1]

[* This referred to the case (which I knew not

[1] It is clear that Wellesley sent this letter to Canning. The note is to him.

to be possible, but which it was right to suppose) that you might not choose to act with some particular persons, or might make other conditions which could not be accepted. The general object of this paragraph was to urge the expediency of making a proposal to you, and at the same time to show that I was not authorised to answer for you in any way whatever before a direct proposition should have been made to you.

Mr. Perceval was aware that *I* could not form a part of any Government with Lord Castlereagh or Lord Sidmouth, unless *you* were one of the Cabinet; but he also knew that I would not oppose such a Government in Parliament after my resignation.—W.][1]

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: May 4, 1810

I received your letter on my return from the House of Commons this morning, and I have been so engaged since I have been up, as not to be able to answer it earlier.

As I never expected that the removal of Lord Mulgrave to the Ordnance and the introduction of Mr. Yorke to the Admiralty would have the effect of giving us any additional strength, I certainly am not disposed to controvert the opinion that we have acquired no new strength by that arrangement; but I must say that I do not apprehend, nor do I perceive any symptom at present which should lead me to think that it is

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 282.

likely to occasion any additional weakness. The clamour attempted to be raised on this occasion by our adversaries, founded upon the impropriety of countenancing by the King a person who had made himself obnoxious to the newspapers by clearing the gallery of the House of Commons, is really nothing but the squib of the day.

Our divisions last night were certainly in thin Houses, and the first was on a question on which, though Ponsonby[1] and Tierney[2] opposed us, some of the Opposition were with us, and, therefore, it cannot safely be argued upon. But the majorities of 138 to 59, and 83 to 26, which were the numbers on these divisions, exhibit a better proportion than almost any divisions which we have had this session.

The prospect, however, of the Government being able to proceed or not, in my opinion is to be judged of by other circumstances, independent altogether of Yorke's appointment. You know very well that I think we have not such strength as (if we could get any additional strength, consistently with what is due to our character) would justify us in forbearing to attempt to procure it.

[1] George Ponsonby (1755-1817), a member of the Irish Parliament from 1776 until its final dissolution, when he sat in the British House of Commons. He was Irish Chancellor of the Exchequer during the vice-royalty of the Duke of Portland, 1782, and Lord Chancellor of Ireland, 1806, but held this high office less than a year. He was a leader of the Commons from 1808.

[2] George Tierney (1761-1830), famous as having fought a duel with Pitt. He was Treasurer of the Navy under Addington, 1802, and President of the Board of Control, 1806.

With respect to all that has passed between Canning, Castlereagh, and ourselves, I enter into all your feelings which will not suffer you to apply to Lord Sidmouth or Castlereagh without at the same time applying to Canning. But I am sure it is the feeling of many of our colleagues, and I confess it is in a great degree my own, that we could not have taken Canning amongst us at present with advantage to our strength or without prejudice to our character, unless we could at the same time have prevailed upon some other of the remains of Pitt's friends to join us.

And, indeed, I understood you to be so far of the same opinion as to think that Canning alone, at the present time, at least, would not in effect give us any strength. If then, that is the real state of the case, I confess it appears to me that at this time, at least, we cannot usefully make an application to Canning. If he should accept our overture we shall get no strength, and I am sure we could not, in fairness either to ourselves or him, make the overture upon the mere expectation of his rejecting it, and by that means attempt to remove an obstacle to our overture elsewhere. I shall, however, very gladly talk over this subject with you when most convenient to you.[1]

Wellesley was a persistent supporter of the war in Spain, which was not popular in England, and in a debate in the House of Lords on June 10, 1810, he defended his position in an eloquent speech. "The struggle in which Spain is now

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 281.

engaged is not merely a Spanish struggle," he said. "No, my Lords, in that struggle are committed the best, the very vital interests of England. With the fate of Spain the fate of England is inseparably blended. Should we not, therefore, stand by her to the last? For my part, my Lords, as an adviser to the Crown, I shall not cease to recommend to my Sovereign to continue to assist Spain to the latest moment of her existence. It should not dishearten us that Spain appears to be in the very crisis of her fate; we should, on the contrary, extend a more anxious care over her at a moment so critical. For in nations, and above all in Spain, how often have the apparent symptoms of dissolution been the presages of new life and of renovated vigour. Therefore I would cling to Spain in her last struggle; therefore I would watch her last agonies. I would wash and heal her wounds, I would receive her parting breath, I would catch and cherish the last vital spark of her expiring patriotism. Nor let this be deemed a mere office of pious charity, nor an exaggerated representation of my feelings, nor an overcharged picture of the circumstances that call them forth. In the cause of Spain the cause of honour and of interest is equally involved and inseparably involved and inseparably allied; it is a cause in favour of which the finest feelings of the heart unite with the soundest dictates of the understanding."

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *House of Commons*
June 13, 1810

The rumours of other arrangements are so strong that I cannot help fearing that something is doing unknown to you, which will place you in an awkward situation.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Gloucester Lodge*
June 14, 1810

You *ought* to know better, to be sure, but since I saw you in the House of Lords yesterday I have received what I should think such positive evidence that something *is* or *has* been doing of the sort to which our conversation referred that I cannot refrain from warning you that such is the general belief; and that but for your disclaimer I should imagine that belief to be well founded.

I only hope that you have not been kept in ignorance, as part of the system. At all events, however, this intimation can do no harm, and may put you on your guard.

Destroy it when read.

P.S. I was in the House till near twelve last night, but saw no symptoms of your speaking, and the course of the debate did not seem to me likely to lead to it. If there is anything that you wish said about Spain which you had not an opportunity of saying to your own satisfaction, let me know it, and I will endeavour to supply it to-day.

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 304.

I shall be at home all day till I go to the House, having a return of the inflammation in my eyes, which prevents my going out this morning to my Committee.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SPENCER PERCEVAL

Private and confidential *Apsley House*
June 14, 1810

The events of the session of Parliament appear to me to have proved the necessity of augmenting the strength of the Government, especially in the House of Commons. Your information and mine lead to the certainty that it would not be practicable to unite the friends of Lord Sidmouth, Lord Castlereagh, and of Mr. Canning, because it has been ascertained that Lord Sidmouth and his friends cannot consent to act with Mr. Canning.

Although the grounds of this objection are entitled to great respect, I confess that I cannot admit the reason or justice of such an exclusion, particularly in the present crisis, when Lord Grey has opened such an attack upon all those leading principles which constituted the basis of Mr. Pitt's Government.

Under these circumstances, I wish to urge a serious consideration of the necessity of making an immediate effort for the purpose of obtaining the aid of Mr. Canning and his friends. For this purpose I am desirous of vacating the office which I now hold in order to admit Mr. Canning, and I am willing either to accept any other suitable office in the Cabinet, or to remain in the Cabinet

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 306.

without office until a vacancy can be conveniently made for me.

You may be assured that I shall most cheerfully act under either arrangement, provided the great advantage of Mr. Canning's assistance can be obtained by it.

I have already repeatedly stated this idea to you, but it has not yet been regularly considered by the Cabinet. I wish you would have the goodness to take their opinion upon it as soon as possible.

Although I cannot positively answer for Mr. Canning's acceptance of a proposal to act in the present Government, I would not suggest such a plan if I were not convinced that he could not decline an arrangement founded on the basis which I have stated.[1]

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: June 15, 1810

I shall feel it to be my duty to bring the subject of your note under the earliest and most attentive consideration of our colleagues, and for this purpose will propose a Cabinet to meet on Sunday, if you have no objection, at three o'clock. If you should not be able to attend at that time I will appoint any other which will better suit you.[2]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SPENCER PERCEVAL

Private and confidential *Dorking*

July 22, 1810

Some time since I took the liberty of stating to

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 308.
[2] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 310.

you my opinion that unless some steps were immediately taken to favour Mr. Canning's admission into the Cabinet, that advantage would be entirely lost to the present Government. At the same time I renewed my former offer respecting my present office, and I stated a desire that the subject should again be considered by the Cabinet.

The great pressure of indispensable matter of practical detail has prevented you and the Cabinet and myself from touching this very delicate (but in my judgment) indispensable discussion. I do not know whether you have had any means of consulting others on the point ; when I spoke to you you seemed still to consider the difficulties with regard to Lord Castlereagh to be insuperable. My information leads me to hope that Lord Castlereagh would be found reasonable and practicable on every branch of the question. At all events, it is very desirable to bring the matter to a final and positive termination, and if it is determined to be either useless or dangerous to accept my offer, to apprise Canning distinctly of his situation.

I understand that he is likely to see you to-morrow on some ordinary business, and I think great advantage might result from your conversing with him freely on the whole subject, and stating your sense of the difficulties which exist, and hearing his ideas with regard to their removal. For my own part I desire you to consider me to be entirely at your disposal, with a most anxious wish, however, that you would employ me and my office for obtaining the benefit of Canning's

assistance* connected with the accession of Lord Castlereagh.

I enclose a note stating in writing the ideas which I have already conveyed to you verbally. (*Pencil note to last*)

[* This is understood by Mr. Perceval to refer to the actual state of the question, in which it was necessary to connect any proposition to Mr. Canning with a similar proposition to Lord Castlereagh.

In every discussion Lord Wellesley has distinctly stated that after reasonable proposals had been made and rejected by Lord Sidmouth and Lord Castlereagh for a more extended plan, he should think it necessary to make a separate proposition to Mr. Canning, and that in that last case he should be ready to resign his office for Mr. Canning.—W.][1]

[Enclosure]

July 23, 1810

Since Lord Wellesley made the proposal of opening the situation which he now holds in the Government for the purpose of obtaining the aid of Mr. Canning, he has learnt that Mr. Canning has received information, through various channels, of the objections which Lord Sidmouth has stated against acting with Mr. Canning. The result of this information on Mr. Canning's mind has not been to determine him never to act with Lord Sidmouth, but Mr. Canning thinks that it would be injurious to his just pretensions to suffer

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 346.

his admission to the Cabinet to be subjected again to the will of Lord Sidmouth and to await any contingent change which time might produce in Lord Sidmouth's sentiments. In this state of circumstances, any long delay in the execution of the proposed plan of strengthening the Government would render it nearly impossible to obtain the services of Mr. Canning.

It is further evident that neither Mr. Canning nor any other person would enter into the Cabinet with so much advantage at a more advanced period of the session, when the whole system of measures for the year must already have been decided, and when the opportunity of taking a part in the councils of the Government would have passed away, and nothing would remain but the necessity of defending in Parliament what had been done in the Cabinet.

It has been proved that Lord Sidmouth's assistance cannot be obtained without the adoption of an exclusive system, which would neither be just in principle nor useful in practice.

It is now certain that any attempt to delay such partial accessions of strength as might now be obtained in the hope of ultimately effecting a more general union, instead of promoting that object, would probably render all such partial accessions of strength, as well as any more general union, utterly impracticable at any future time.

It is not ascertained that Lord Castlereagh would refuse to act with Mr. Canning, and the accession of those two persons to the present

Government would certainly furnish great additional strength.

Lord Wellesley therefore wishes most anxiously that the consideration of this most important subject should be renewed, in consequence of the circumstances which tend to prove that unless Mr. Canning be now received into the Cabinet his future admission may become hopeless, and with it all prospect of additional strength may be precluded.

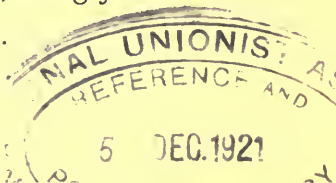
With this view Lord Wellesley repeats the offer made in his former note to Mr. Perceval, and he further proposes to be the channel of any communication which it may be thought advisable to make to Lord Castlereagh. At all events, he thinks the question should now be finally decided, as it is not reasonable to expect that either Mr. Canning or Lord Castlereagh can long remain open to any overture.[1]

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Ealing*
August 17, 1810

I send you at last the draft of a letter to Castlereagh. After much consideration and reconsideration, I do not see how consistently with that fair exposure of the real state of the case, which is unquestionably due to him, I can put the question in a more favourable manner. But, I confess, my hopes of his favourable reception of it are very far from sanguine. If any alterations occur to you which might give it a better chance, I beg you will

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 348.



communicate them, and I will give them the fullest consideration.

I request your particular attention to that part of it which relates to yourself. Of course I have endeavoured to state it as concisely as I can ; if I have failed in any degree you will point out the particulars, and in general exercise your free criticism without the least reserve.

When you have read it and made your observations, I wish you to be so good as to forward it to Dundas, that he may also try his hand at removing anything which may seem to him likely to disappoint our object. He will be so good as to return it to me. I will thank you both not to lose time in forwarding it, as it is a sort of letter which I shall not trust to an amanuensis to copy, and therefore wish to ensure the having Sunday next for copying it over myself.[1]

[Enclosure]

Draft Letter of Spencer Perceval *to* Lord Castlereagh

August 22, 1810

When you learn that the object of this letter is to ascertain what chance there may be of your being prevailed upon to accept an office in the present Government, you will easily conceive how much I must regret that I did not find myself prepared to open this subject to you before you left the neighbourhood of London. The explanations which may be necessary and must be convenient upon such an occasion, and the facility

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 358.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., pinxt. *W. Evans, delt.* *H. Meyer, sculpt.*

HENRY ROBERT STEWART, VISCOUNT CASTLEREAGH

which conversation affords to such explanations, would have rendered a personal communication upon it infinitely preferable to any which can take place by letter.

To make this mode of communication, however (which is the only one now open to me), as little defective and as satisfactory as possible, I shall think it necessary to explain to you fully what has been the course of my own thoughts and of those of my colleagues upon this subject, as well as to state to you what has been done by us in consequence.

Upon one point we have been uniformly unanimous, namely, in the wish to regain your assistance in His Majesty's service. On the best means, and on the greater or less probability of regaining it, as well as upon the circumstances which should accompany any attempt to regain it, we have thought differently ; and it is out of the endeavours to reconcile these differences, and to remove the difficulties which they have occasioned, that the delay has arisen in my explaining myself to you.

That it was expedient for the public service that we should endeavour to procure additional strength to the Government, provided it could be procured consistently with our due honour and character, and with the honour and character of those to whom any overture might be made, has been, from the first moment our own Government was formed, the constant opinion of us all.

But till its fate, or at least the probability of its continuing to exist for any time, was better

ascertained than it could have been previous to the discussions on the Walcheren question, obvious reasons, which it is not at all necessary to detail, rendered any attempt at such a measure in the opinions of most of us inexpedient and objectionable. After that discussion was over, many difficulties still remained.

Lord Sidmouth, yourself, and Canning were the three heads of parties to whom alone we could be looking, and if we had considered nothing but the relative strength of your respective connections, it would have been obvious that the application to any one of you with the probable effect of alienating the other two would not promise us any advantage, whilst the most desirable thing upon every account appeared to be the prevailing upon you all, if possible, to join us. We were all agreed that no offer could be made with propriety to anyone which did not comprehend you and was not made to you also ; that not only the interests of the public service required that we should endeavour to procure your assistance, but that our feelings of what was due to you rendered this indispensably necessary. Lord Wellesley was amongst the first to urge the expediency of our union including yourself, Lord Sidmouth, and Canning.

Lord Wellesley has uniformly been desirous of obtaining your assistance and of acting with you in the King's service, and has always stated the justice and propriety of comprehending you in any plan which might be proposed for enlarging the basis of the Government. He has also declared his disapprobation of any plan which should

exclude any of the three parties already named and, on this ground, as well as for other reasons, he has signified that he could not be a party to any application in any quarter unless a similar application should be made at the same time to Canning.

After all that had then so recently happened between you and Canning, and, especially, while you were both exposed, at any day, to the probability of fresh debates opening the discussions upon your differences, the overture to you and Canning, at such a time, unless it could be reconciled to your respective feelings by the circumstances under which it was made, and with which it might be accompanied, appeared to be hopeless ; at least it seemed evident that premature attempts of that nature would, in all probability, not only have failed, but might have had a very probable tendency to render the prospect of future reunion more difficult and distant.

Besides these considerations affecting you and Canning, from what were supposed to be the feelings of Lord Sidmouth and Canning towards each other, difficulties likely to prove insurmountable were thought to exist in those quarters to any proposition which should extend to both of them. Lord Wellesley's opinions, indeed, were different on these points. It occurred to him, and he was strongly impressed with the opinion, that the state of the King's Government and of the nation was such, that not only an attempt ought to be made to collect again together in one body all the remaining friends of Pitt's connection, but that

there was reason for thinking it might be made with a fair prospect of success ; that the principles of an overture upon such an extended basis might be forcibly urged upon the individuals to whom it was made, as affording a motive to forget all former feelings, in any degree of a personal nature, and to reconcile them, on public grounds, to unite for the purpose of upholding that system and those principles which the state of parties exposed to great danger, and called upon public men to make considerable sacrifices to preserve.

It was obvious that, in order to make room for an arrangement on so extensive a scale, no inconsiderable sacrifices would be necessary for this purpose amongst ourselves and our friends ; but the object seemed to be so great and paramount as to justify the expectation that such sacrifices would be cheerfully made, and that whatever awkwardnesses any individuals might have felt from their part in such arrangement, the liberality of the principles, the extent and natural importance of the object, would have afforded a complete and satisfactory answer to any objections which could have been felt by themselves or suggested by others to the part which such individuals might have in it.

Lord Wellesley felt and pressed these considerations very strongly ; he thought that Lord Sidmouth and Canning might without difficulty be brought to admit the force of them, so as to forget their former feelings for each other. And although I confess I was not so sanguine on the subject as he was, yet I certainly did feel that if

they could have been prevailed upon to view the subject in the light above represented, it would have given me the most favourable means of opening a proposition of this kind to you. I therefore consented to the attempt being made with them, and so long ago as the Easter recess means were employed to ascertain from Lord Sidmouth and Canning whether, if upon the principle of re-assembling the separated members of Pitt's party an offer should be made comprehending you, Lord Sidmouth, Canning, and your respective friends, they, Lord Sidmouth and Canning, would be disposed to a favourable consideration of it. No direct offer was made, but means were taken to ascertain their sentiments. Had the result been favourable you would have immediately heard from me. But it was not favourable.

Canning declined giving any positive answer to a question of so hypothetical a nature; it was evident, however (although he would not pledge himself without receiving a more direct and distinct proposal), that his reply to any such specific offer would not have been founded on any exclusive principle or personal prejudice, and that he would not have objected to the mere proposition of acting in a Government either with you or Lord Sidmouth. Lord Sidmouth declined being a party to a union with us upon so extensive a principle. The Easter recess had nearly worn away while we were obtaining and considering the result of these enquiries, and had we seen any new and satisfactory mode of proceeding upon this subject it would have been hardly possible to

have found time for it during the pressure of Parliamentary business.

Towards the close of the session Lord Wellesley still retained the idea that Lord Sidmouth's objections and difficulties might be removed. He thought (especially after Lord Grey's last speech, which appeared to be a declaration of war against all the principles and the whole system of Pitt's Government) that the policy and necessity of a union amongst the remains of Pitt's friends might be made to appear still more plainly, and Lord Sidmouth be prevailed upon to act upon the view which might be given to him of that necessity. He was desirous of trying how far he could himself prevail upon him; and about that time Lord Wellesley saw Lord Sidmouth and one of his principal friends for that purpose, but he could make no alteration in Lord Sidmouth's determination. *Lord Sidmouth upon this occasion explained himself fully. His objection was to Canning—not, as he said, a personal one, nor upon any grounds of private or personal dislike, but upon the public ground, that he did not think that if Canning were to make one in the Government formed of himself, of you, and of us, the public would believe there was that confidence and cordiality amongst ourselves which could alone give us the confidence of the country; and without that confidence the Government could not have that strength which it was the professed object of the proposed arrangement to procure.

*Perhaps this is unnecessary and better left out. Sp. P.

I think this should stand. W.

Agreed! Sp. P.

We were thus flung back upon our original difficulties. We had looked to an arrangement on an extended basis, as the best calculated to reconcile difficulties and awkwardnesses which might possibly be felt in a more contracted one; yet as we must now forego all hopes of procuring any additional strength for the King's service unless an attempt should be made upon the more contracted one, and as the opinion still remains amongst us very strong, after much and frequent deliberation upon these considerations, and in conformity to the clear opinion of myself and colleagues, I have determined to put plainly the question to you, whether if I should receive His Majesty's commands to make a joint offer to you and Canning of two of the highest and most affluent and responsible offices of the State, you would be disposed to give a favourable reception to such an offer; and I cannot forbear from expressing my hopes that when you consider the state of the country and the great importance of such an expression of strength and ability as this arrangement would give to the King's councils, you will now, after the interval which has elapsed, see no reason for refusing to give that reception to the proposition which at an earlier period perhaps you would have felt some reluctance in affording.

In endeavouring to regain you and Canning to His Majesty's service it certainly would not only be my wish, but must be an essential object with me, to endeavour to proceed in such a manner as was most likely to be acceptable to both your feelings, such necessarily being the most likely, of

course, to obtain my purpose. The return of both or either of you to your old offices would not, I think, be likely to attain this object. If it would be so, in justice to Lord Wellesley and Lord Liverpool I ought to say that they would willingly part with them for the purpose. It is, however, as it appears to me, obvious that it would be inconvenient that you should *both* return into your former offices; and if only *one* did so return the impression might be unfavourable to the *other* who did not. There remain, therefore, only two other offices of an efficiency and station which allow of their being offered to you. I mean the Admiralty and the Home Secretary of State's. I am empowered to state to you that the present possessors of these offices will have no difficulty in making way for you, and that I shall not be embarrassed by the arrangement which their removal will render necessary. As to the choice between the two offices, I would rather not be put to make it for you, but would wish to leave it to yourselves, if possible, to arrange; and indeed upon this and every minor point of detail in the arrangement, if you can be once prevailed upon to see, in the great advantage which would be derived to the public by the return of you both to power, a sufficient motive for your giving a favourable reception to the proposition itself, I cannot think that any difficulty can occur which may not be easily surmounted.

In putting this question to you, to learn what your reception of such an offer, if made, would be likely to be, instead of making the offer itself you

will see that I avoid putting it as an offer in His Majesty's name, and thereby save you (in the event of your declining it) from any awkwardness which you might feel in declining a gracious offer from the King; but at the same time I wish you distinctly to understand that I have no difficulty whatever in assuring you that you may rely upon it, if you feel no insurmountable objection, His Majesty will, without doubt, empower me to make the offer immediately in the most formal manner.

I ought to state to you that, though Lord Camden has no objection to continue in office with us whilst hypothetical enquiries of this sort have been making as to the manner in which an offer if made would be received; and though he was anxious for the success of the arrangement if it could have been accomplished upon the more extended scale, comprehending Lord Sidmouth and his friends; and though he is also desirous not to stand in the way of any arrangement which may be thought advisable for His Majesty's service, yet he has declared that he could not be a party to the offer itself. He feels hurt at the style and manner in which Canning wrote and circulated the letters to him, and therefore, though he gives every reason to believe that he would support the Government should the alteration comprehending you only take place, yet he will not remain a member of it if Canning comes in. He states this determination always in most perfect good humour to me; and indeed I ought to add that he has always in the most liberal and friendly manner given me to understand that his office was at any time at

my disposal whenever I thought it could be useful to an arrangement advantageous to the King's service.

Long as this detail and statement are, yet I am fearful that there may be many points on which you might wish for further explanation. If I could foresee those points I would certainly endeavour to anticipate those enquiries. You will naturally feel that I shall be most anxious to receive your answer. I am not, however, so unreasonable as to desire you to hasten it beyond your own convenience. One advantage of a communication upon such a subject at this season is that there is time enough to consider and arrange it.

However much I wish that I may have put this subject in such a light as will induce you to receive it favourably, yet should the contrary unfortunately be the case, I beg you will understand that as I should have no right to ask for the reasons of your refusal, so I would really prefer that you should not state them. They possibly may be of a nature which, though you may feel them strongly at the moment, may be likely in time to wear out. I should fear that the mere fact of once having formally stated them may give them a strength and permanency which would not otherwise belong to them, and which it is very material to the public service should not exist.

I am aware that the subject on which I have been writing is one of very considerable delicacy, yet I have purposely avoided anything like a formal and ceremonious opening of it. As the

explanation of my thoughts and views upon it have been most full and open, I was desirous that the manner of making it should be equally frank, full, and without reserve, and I am persuaded this is the manner which you would most prefer. But, at all events, the letter is too long to admit of being lengthened with any unnecessary apology, and therefore I will conclude.[1]

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Ealing: August 19, 1810

I return you your paper of amendments to my letter. I have adopted them all *verbatim*, except in the two or three words which you will find altered in my handwriting in the copy which I return.

The advantage of communicating with Canning again till we have heard from Castlereagh does not appeal to me, and the necessity of it, considering how long we have been communicating with him before we have communicated with Castlereagh at all, I certainly do not see; and, upon the whole, unless you have some very strong reason for wishing it, I should rather think it was better to wait till you could tell him the result.

I hope your cold is better.[2]

LORD CASTLEREAGH *to* SPENCER PERCEVAL

Private and confidential *Mount Stewart*

September 4, 1810

Having protracted my journey longer than I

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 364.
[2] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 362.

had intended, I did not receive your letter of the 22nd ult. till yesterday on my landing.

Desiring to express in suitable terms to you and your colleagues my sense of the sentiments you are pleased to express towards me personally, I am not less sensible of your attention in relieving me by the mode of your communication from the necessity of declining in any more formal manner a proposition which it is conceived might contribute to the advantage of His Majesty's service.

It is unnecessary for me to trouble you with the considerations in detail which suggest themselves to me, upon the reasoning which you have taken the trouble so fully and candidly to open. It is enough that I should express my own firm persuasion that an arrangement of the nature you propose (even were all obstacles to the cordial consolidation of the arrangement itself successfully surmounted) could not command the public confidence, or inspire the nation at the present moment with an impression that the administration entrusted with the management of affairs was really united within itself.

Under these impressions, I trust not inconsiderately formed, or resulting from any unbecoming feelings of a personal nature, I need hardly add that, were the offer in question made to me, it would be impossible for me to hesitate in soliciting His Majesty's gracious permission dutifully to decline it.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 382.

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* LORD CASTLEREAGH

Downing Street: September 8, 1810

I this day received your letter of the 4th inst. However much I may regret the nature of your answer, I cannot decline giving myself the satisfaction of thanking you for the kind manner in which you have received and answered my letter to you.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* SPENCER PERCEVAL

Private and confidential *Hinckley*

September 26, 1810

The communication made to me through Lord Wellesley at Easter, and others which I have subsequently received from him, and with which you are acquainted, have placed me in a situation in which I think it fair, both to myself and to you, to state to you directly, and without disguise, my sentiments on the subject of those communications.

In the course of the Easter recess Lord Wellesley was commissioned by you and the rest of his colleagues to endeavour to ascertain from me:

1st. Whether I would consent to act with the existing Government *on its present basis?* (By which I understand to be meant, with *your continuance at the head of the Treasury*);

2nd. Whether I would consent to act with a Government which should comprehend the several persons who had at any time been connected with Mr. Pitt? (By which description I understood *Lord Sidmouth and Lord Castlereagh* to be particularly intended).

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 383.

It appeared to me that I could not reasonably be called upon for a gratuitous declaration of my opinions upon questions involving matter of so much personal delicacy. I declared my readiness to give a distinct answer to any specified and practical proposition, but I declined giving any answer to the two questions thus abstractedly proposed to me.

Some time in the month of May, or early in June, Lord Wellesley expressed to me an anxious wish to give up the Seals of the Foreign Department, for the purpose of their being offered to me ; but previously to his making the tender of this resignation he desired to learn from me whether, if such an offer should be made to me, I would entertain it.

I took some days to consider this question, and then informed Lord Wellesley that if the proposal were to be accompanied with the assurance of *his* remaining in the Government in some situation satisfactory to himself, and with suitable arrangements for those persons with whom I was immediately connected, I would not refuse to entertain it.

I had learnt in the interval, since Lord Wellesley's first communication to me at Easter, that the same questions which he had *then* been employed to put to me had at the same time been propounded to Lord Sidmouth, and that, from the manner in which he had received them, all idea of his accession to the Government, on the principles proposed, was at an end.

I understand from Lord Wellesley that no

similar communication had yet been made to Lord Castlereagh, but that it was determined by the Cabinet, with Lord Wellesley's perfect acquiescence, that it would be right to combine an overture to him with any other overture for obtaining an accession of strength to the Government. And when I saw Lord Wellesley last, towards the end of August, he informed me that, in pursuance of that determination, *you* had undertaken to write to Lord Castlereagh for the purpose of ascertaining whether he would be willing to listen to any overture that might be made to him.

Lord Wellesley likewise described the nature of the offers which it was in the contemplation of the Government to make, jointly or simultaneously, to Lord Castlereagh and me, if it should appear probable that they might be made with success. But he stated distinctly that he was not then authorised to make any proposition to me, nor to receive any answer from me.

To the proposition then stated by him to be in contemplation I should have had no hesitation, so far as related to myself, in giving a decided negative. But, complicated as that part which related to me was with the intended offer to Lord Castlereagh, I did not like to anticipate the statement of a refusal, the motives of which might have appeared equivocal.

I have recently heard from Lord Wellesley that the answer received by you from Lord Castlereagh is such as to show that the Government has no prospect at present of obtaining his accession, but that there is nothing in that answer which appears

to point at any personal objection to any individual.

I can now, therefore, say, without any apprehension of being misinterpreted, that I should have begged leave to decline the intended offer to me, independently of any consideration of its being coupled to one with Lord Castlereagh.

I say this with the less scruple as I have already avowed to you that I should *not* have declined the proposition suggested by Lord Wellesley, and as I am equally ready to declare that if *that* proposition were *now* made to me (with the qualifications which I have already described), and were it to be His Majesty's gracious pleasure to command my services in the office in which I had before the honour to serve him, I should *now* be prepared to obey His Majesty's commands.

I cannot but be aware of the misconstructions to which the openness of this declaration might expose me, if I could imagine that any unfair advantage would be taken of it. But after the discussions which have taken place I have thought it better that the precise proposition, to which in the course of them my consent was given, should be distinctly defined and understood, than that I should risk the imputation, either on the one hand of having been determined to reject *all* overture, or on the other of having been willing to accept *any* thing that might be offered to me.

The very basis of the proposition which I consented to accept (Lord Wellesley's voluntary resignation of his present office) sufficiently shows that it did not originate with me.

And by declaring my readiness to agree to this proposition, at the expense of a sacrifice of personal feeling on my part (which I do not pretend to undervalue), I trust I shall at least have attained the object for which I determined to make that sacrifice, and for which I have now determined to make this declaration—that of proving that it is not by any personal pretensions of mine that the re-union of the friends of Mr. Pitt in the service of the country is rendered impracticable.

On the other hand, I beg it may be understood that this declaration is on my part final; that it is to the proposition to which I have referred *alone* that I have been, or am now, willing to assent; and that while I have myself scrupulously abstained from anything like an exclusive principle, or individual objection, I am not to be considered as acquiescing in such a principle, if stated with respect to me, nor as being ready to wait the good pleasure of any individual.

I do not communicate this letter to Lord Wellesley, though I have, of course, thought it right to tell him that I intended writing to you.[1]

Draft of SPENCER PERCEVAL'S *reply to* GEORGE CANNING

September 30, 1810

I have received your letter of the 26th inst. from Hinckley, and have shown it to Lord Wellesley.

As your object in writing seems to have been to prevent the possibility of misunderstanding with regard to the nature and extent of the consent

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 401.

which you may have been prepared to give to any proposal which might have been made to you for joining the present Government, a very short answer on my part will, I trust, be sufficient and satisfactory.

I never conceived myself authorised to infer from what had passed any consent of yours, beyond what you state in your letter. Indeed, I might have doubted whether I could justly have presumed upon that consent even so far. I had understood from Lord Wellesley that if a proposition for your return to your former office were made, connected with the assurance of a satisfactory arrangement for Lord Wellesley, and a suitable consideration of your friends, you would feel no such objection to my continuing to hold my present situation, and no such personal objection to any individual, whether a member of the present Government, or one to whom an offer might be made at the same time, as would preclude you from entertaining such a proposition, and from being prepared to discuss the details of it. This is the full extent which I had felt myself authorised to collect from anything which I understood to have passed between Lord Wellesley and you; and the hope which I acknowledge I indulged, that you might have been prevailed upon to accede to an arrangement which might have placed you in another office, if such an arrangement had been found upon the whole more consistent with the general interests and strength of the Government, was certainly founded on my own reasoning rather

than upon anything which I had understood to have fallen from you.[1]

In 1810 the King was again unwell. He had been much worried by the failure of the Walcheren Expedition, and greatly distressed by the "Duke and Darling" scandal[2] that resulted in the retirement of his son, the Duke of York, from the office of Commander-in-Chief. The final blow to his reason was the death on November 2 of his youngest and favourite daughter, the Princess Amelia. He was then placed in the custody of his physicians. "The Marquess Wellesley, as a member of the Privy Council," says Pearce, "visited the King during the calamitous affliction under which he suffered, to ascertain and report upon the state of His Majesty's health. When his Lordship entered the apartment in which the royal sufferer was confined he found the man whom he had been accustomed to see surrounded with the insignia of power, and all the heraldic pomp of state-ceremonial, sitting in a condition of complete nakedness on his bed, sunk apparently in hopeless oblivion. Lord Wellesley was so deeply affected that he could not refrain from tears, and in after life never adverted to the subject without emotion."[3]

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 405.

[2] This scandal arose out of the sale of commissions in the army by Mary Anne Clarke, the mistress of the Duke of York. It was brought to light by Colonel Wardle in 1809, and was the subject of debate in Parliament.

[3] *Life of Wellesley*, iii. 167.

Notes of the result of the Examination of the Physicians in attendance on HIS MAJESTY, *by* THE LORD PRESIDENT *and* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Windsor: November 21, 1810

His Majesty has had a relapse of his disorder within the last week, which has interrupted the progress of amendment described in the bulletin of the 13th inst. The disorder has not returned with the same degree of violence which marked its commencement. His Majesty's present state of understanding and health is nearly similar to the second stage of nearly all his former complaints of a similar description.

In His Majesty's former complaints he has passed through a similar stage of imperfect use of judgment previously to the entire recovery of reason.

In ordinary cases the present state of his disorder would be deemed more likely to be permanent than its more violent state, but as His Majesty has usually passed through this state previous to recovery, it is probable that his present condition will not be permanent.

His Majesty is not at present in possession of the power of exercising his judgment, although the excess of passion is not so great nor so frequent as at the commencement of the relapse, and his manner is on the whole more mild than at any period of time since the commencement of the relapse, although he is occasionally passionate and violent.

This relapse does not affect the probability of His Majesty's ultimate recovery.

It is, however, probable that this relapse may retard the period of His Majesty's ultimate recovery. It is not probable that His Majesty can be completely recovered in less than three months.

This would be deemed by the physicians a speedy recovery.

It is nearly impossible that His Majesty should be completely recovered before the 29th inst.

It is probable that many intervals may occur before the expiration of three months, in which His Majesty may be competent to any single (but not to any complicated) act of Government.

Such an interval may occur previous to the 29th inst.

During any such interval it would be impossible to reckon upon the continuance of His Majesty's competency of reason for any, even the most limited, period of time. Dr. Willis stated that during such intervals it would not be prudent to trust His Majesty without constant superintendence. It would probably retard the time of His Majesty's ultimate recovery if he were soon to perform any act of Government.

The cause of this relapse was His Majesty's solicitude respecting the funeral of the Princess Amelia, and the pains which His Majesty employed in the settlement of remunerations to Her Royal Highness' attendants.

This cause being intimately connected with the original cause of His Majesty's present illness, and having also ceased to exist, it is probable that its consequences may not be permanent.

The physicians stated that the most urgent and afflicting symptom in His Majesty's actual situation was the want of sleep. They expressed considerable expectations of the relief which might ensue from any long interval of sleep, and those who had attended His Majesty in former attacks stated that, in the course of this illness, short intervals of sleep had produced more decisively favourable consequences than they had remembered in His Majesty's former illnesses.[1]

Notes on the General State of Europe, by THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

London: May 15, 1811

The commencement of the Spanish Revolution afforded the only opportunity which this country has for some years possessed of directing the efforts of her army with effect against the overgrown power of France. It was therefore always Lord Wellesley's opinion that as soon as it appeared evident that the people of the Peninsula were resolved to endure everything, rather than submit to the French power, it was our policy to found, in the Peninsula, a system of military operations which should demand the employment of such a portion of the military power of France as should give to the other powers of the Continent the means, not only of recruiting their strength, but of employing that strength for the purpose of relieving themselves from the dominion and influence of France.

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 435.

Our system was to be framed on principles of slow operation, to produce remote results, but beneficial effects to the common cause in every successive stage. It was not to be expected that the system, however successfully pursued, was to destroy the power of France, or to overthrow its present form of government for the purpose of introducing another of our election; but the fair and rational object of the system was to enable us in the first instance (as far as respected our own security), and ultimately the powers of the Continent, to restrain the power of France within such limits as might be necessary to the safety, liberty, and tranquillity of Europe, and to check the design of universal dominion, which, of late years, has been so successfully pursued by the present ruler of France.

This object could be accomplished only by creating so powerful a diversion in the Peninsula as might enable the powers on the Continent to oppose the views of France, according to their respective means, so that France might be reduced to the alternative, either of relinquishing her designs in the Peninsula or elsewhere, or of making an imperfect effort in two quarters. In one case, we might be certain of success in that quarter which France should abandon; in the other case, we might hope for success in resisting the divided efforts of that great power, which, when concentrated, has generally proved irresistible. The system, in its practical operation, would resemble a machine which could work at either or both extremities, as occasions might offer. For

instance, if a large portion of the French army were employed in the Peninsula, then an opportunity was afforded to the powers of the Continent of acting against France. On the other hand, if a large portion of the French army were directed against the other continental powers, then an opportunity was afforded of rescuing the Peninsula from the dominion of France.

It is true that this system has not been steadily pursued by England, nor has it been carried to the full extent of which the resources and means of England were capable. If the whole, or at all events a considerable portion, of the Force employed against Walcheren had been applied (on the principles above described) to the Peninsula, there can be no doubt that the most complete success would have ensued; and it was on this ground that Lord Wellesley objected to the expedition against Walcheren, and has ever considered it as the most absurd and ruinous project[1] ever attempted; especially in the manner in which the attempt was made. He does not think that, even since he has been in the Cabinet, all has been done that could or ought to have been done, either in money or men in the Peninsula.

The prosecution of this system is equally beneficial to England, both in all its intermediate stages and in its possible final result. Imperfect as the efforts of England have been, they have four times saved the Peninsula from the dominion of France, and by that means have prevented France from

[1] From here to the end of the paragraph is marked in the original "Most secret."

directing her military power against this country, either by an immediate invasion of England, or, more remotely, though scarcely less dangerously, by an effort against Ireland; and from directing her power to the utter extinction of the continental powers of Europe.

When Buonaparte in person, at the head of a numerous army, was employing every effort to subjugate Spain, the Emperor of Austria suddenly armed against France, and compelled Buonaparte to quit Spain, to withdraw a portion of the force employed in that country, to leave the designs against the Peninsula unexecuted, and to entrust the completion of them to his generals. It is true that Austria failed, because she rushed into a war too precipitately. But the event proved satisfactorily the operation of the system (which has been described), and showed that it was not necessary to excite Austria to exertion. In truth, Austria suffered from the excess of temerity and precipitation, and, instead of being excited, she required to be restrained. If Austria had waited patiently till the proper season for action, and had matured and digested her plan of operation, the result of the contest might have been very different. But, even as it happened, it diminished the efforts of France on the Peninsula for a time, and enabled us to make more effectual preparations in Portugal during the interval. And perhaps this case of Austria proves in the clearest way the advantage of protracting the war in the Peninsula, which, even if not very favourable, must be advantageous to the grand object of wasting the resources of France by a double pressure.

With respect to the ultimate result of the proposed system, the advantages which it holds forth to England, if successful, are equally manifest and important. It will rescue the Peninsula and its colonies from the dominion of France ; it will place the Peninsula and its colonies, from a natural union of interests, under the influence of Great Britain ; it will relieve an extensive country, full of resource, military, naval, and commercial, possessing the richest and most extensive colonies in the world, from an oppressive Government, and establish in its room a Government of well-tempered liberty, formed upon the model of our own constitution ; it will secure to us a great and efficient ally on the very border of France, and will enable us to impose a stronger restraint upon France than was ever before in our power. Such are the probable results of the system, if it be admitted that it be carried into effect.

If it should be successful, the state of Europe, and of the world, will be more advantageous to England than it has ever been since the House of Bourbon was unfortunately placed on the throne of Spain.

There is at present every encouragement to hope for a successful result, because it may with perfect truth be asserted that, at the present moment, nearly three years from the commencement of the struggle, Buonaparte has not advanced a single step towards the subjugation of Spain, and his armies for the third time have been driven with disgrace from Portugal.

The continuance of this system has greatly

embarrassed France, has compelled her, at an enormous expense of men, money, and military resources, as well as of military character, to employ a large portion of her army against Spain, and has again given time to the other continental powers to prepare means of resistance. Not only has the lustre of the French armies been tarnished by the long continuance of an unsuccessful struggle, and, in many instances, the positive defeats she has sustained (in addition to the acknowledged failure of their military skill and science opposed to ours), but Spain and Portugal have held forth to the nations of Europe a glorious and instructive example of resistance against a power which, by its repeated successes, had created an opinion that it was irresistible.

Russia.—It now appears that the Emperor of Russia, seeing the tendency of Buonaparte's ambitious projects, is actively preparing the means of resistance. It appears that these preparations have been accelerated since the Court of Petersburg has become acquainted with the incorporation of the Hanse towns with France, and of the Duchy of Oldenburg, the integrity of which was guaranteed by the treaty of Tilsit. His Imperial Majesty has likewise taken great umbrage at what Buonaparte calls the Continental System, which, for the purpose of destroying the commerce of England, will in fact destroy the whole commerce of Europe. That system has not been carried into effect in any part of His Imperial Majesty's dominions.

The Court of Petersburg seems to be convinced

that she must be prepared to resist the further encroachments of France, as concessions will only produce fresh demands. A considerable body of troops has been assembled; the manufacture of every description of arms has been encouraged; the organisation of the army has been altered and improved; and it appears that Russia is now really convinced of the necessity of opposing France, not for any general purpose of coalition, or support of other powers, but for the independence and safety of Russia herself.

The relative situations of Russia with Turkey and Persia are unfavourable to the prosecution of any great and vigorous effort against France. At the very moment that Russia is compelled to adopt measures for her security from the oppression of France, she is carrying on a war of ambition and aggrandisement against Turkey and Persia. While she is taking up arms to defend her ancient possessions, she is struggling for the conquest of Wallachia and Moldavia. It is certainly her interest to come to terms both with Persia and Turkey, but Persia will probably reject peace, unless Russia shall withdraw from her projects of aggrandisement, and shall retrocede possessions which she is evidently anxious to retain; and it is not probable that the Turks will be moderate in their demands, if they should perceive that Russia is driven to peace with them in order that she may be better prepared against France.

In this state of circumstances, Lord Wellesley has been pressed to make advances to Russia, and to encourage a spirit of resistance against France.

But Lord Wellesley has thought it advisable to be perfectly silent on the subject, for, in addition to other powerful arguments, the fate of Austria, in the East campaign, proved that the continental powers of Europe required a curb and not a spur. Russia would either suspect our advances, or be encouraged by them to make demands of money and armies which we could not satisfy; and in either case the final result would be to excite jealousy or dissatisfaction. In no case could we hope to increase her means of resistance against France until her own efforts shall have brought her into a state in which our aid might be useful. This cannot be expected before she shall have acted in such a way as to prove that she is resolved sincerely, and with energy, to apply all her resources to the object of rescuing her empire from the usurpation of France, and by the means within her power to open to England such commercial and naval advantages as shall facilitate our advances towards her assistance.

In the event of a rupture between Russia and France, it is certain that we can give Russia no money, and it is probable that it will not be in our power to give her any military assistance. Aid perhaps may be afforded by maritime operations, and by supplies of arms and stores.

It is, however, desirable to know Lord Wellington's opinion, applicable to some contingencies which may arise.

First.—If France should persevere in her projects against the Peninsula and make a vigorous effort in that quarter? In this case, it will

naturally follow that all our exertions must be made in that quarter.

Second.—If France should act on the defensive in Spain, and even retire to the Ebro, and should relinquish her active operations in the Peninsula until the termination of a contest with Russia, would it be advisable to withdraw any portion of our army in the Peninsula, in order to employ it in the north of Europe ?

Third.—If France should attempt both objects, and should make an imperfect effort both in the Peninsula and in the north of Europe, would it be advisable to withdraw any portion of our army from the Peninsula for the purpose of employing it in the north of Europe ?

In either of the two last cases, if it be judged expedient to employ, in the north of Europe, any part of the army which is now in the Peninsula, to what points, and in what manner, could such operations be directed with any prospect of advantage ?

AUSTRIA.—There can be little doubt that Austria is much dissatisfied with France, nor has the marriage established, or even promoted, confidence and cordiality between the two Courts.

But the Government is miserably weak, and her finances are represented to be in the most deplorable condition. She is endeavouring to improve her situation, but a certain period of time is absolutely necessary to enable her to recover herself from the efforts of the last struggle. She must remain at least neutral, and she may be apprehensive that Russia may be too precipitate.

But she cannot wish well to France, nor can she wish for the subjugation of Russia.

The policy of Austria will certainly be to remain neutral, and although not well affected to France, nor at present disinclined towards Russia, she will probably look to the possible advantages of a neutrality (necessary from other causes) in the eventual plunder of the Russian Empire.

This is the unfortunate result of her weak (if not corrupt) councils. But if Russia should resist France successfully or maintain the struggle for any long time, the same motives will lead Austria to counteract France to the utmost extent of her means.

PRUSSIA.—Prussia is in a most deplorable condition, and at present it is apprehended that she must take part with France. The Court may be absolutely subject to France, but the officers of the Prussian army are extremely adverse to France. This idea is confirmed by what has passed at Colberg, where it appears certain that some resistance has been opposed to the French troops. Prussia would rise against France in any favourable crisis.

DENMARK.—It is probable that the people of Denmark are favourably disposed towards England and hostile to France; but the King is not only adverse to England, but outrageously mad in his hostility. Denmark will probably follow the success of Russia.

SWEDEN.—The people of Sweden are very favourably inclined towards us, and Bernadotte affects to participate in that disposition. Bernadotte says that as he is now a true Swede, he

naturally adopts all the feelings and interests of his country, and is therefore hostile to the ambitious projects of Buonaparte. But his affectation is so gross and absurd that Lord Wellesley cannot persuade himself to give credit to Bernadotte's protestations.

Sweden, however, is at the mercy of England, and much afraid of Russia, and if Russia should make head against France, Sweden must follow our orders. Upon the whole of this state of affairs, does Lord Wellington think that we should look to the Peninsula exclusively, or make any reserve for exertions in the north of Europe ; and, if we should make attempts in that quarter, where and how ?

Whether, in any of the cases supposed, any attempt could be made with advantage on any part of the coast of France, either northward of Spain, or in the Mediterranean ?

Whether any attempt shall be made from Sicily, either on the coasts of Spain, or France, or in Italy, or in the island of Corfu, or other isles of the Adriatic, or any part of those seas ?

A large part of the Austrian army will be disbanded. If France should be able to terrify Austria, could any part of this force be advantageously used in Spain, or collected in the Adriatic isles for eventual war in Italy ?

Minorca is seriously menaced by France. What steps can be taken for its defence ? which is an object of great importance. Lord Wellington should state his sentiments on this point to Mr. Henry Wellesley at Cadiz.

America.—Lord Wellington will perceive from the instructions to Mr. Foster the nature of our relations with America. Since the date of these instructions, America has proceeded to various acts of violence against our ships, and it may be necessary to retaliate against these proceedings by distressing her commerce. She has also interfered in a very improper manner with the proceedings of the Spanish-American colonies, and is evidently most hostilely disposed towards this country.

In the event of her proceeding to extremities, what military, naval, and political measures should, in Lord Wellington's opinion, be adopted towards America ?[1]

The Marquess Wellesley *to* Spencer Perceval

Private and secret — *Apsley House*, *July* 28, 1811

I saw the Prince Regent[2] yesterday, when he expressed considerable anxiety that Parliament should not be prorogued during the present critical state of the King's bodily health. He wished that an adjournment should take place for ten days or a fortnight in order to afford sufficient time for determining the probable issue of the present crisis. He desired me to mention his wishes on this subject to you, if I should happen to see you before he saw you. As I understand that the Regent is gone to Windsor this morning I trouble you with this note.

[1] Add. MSS. 37293 f. 5.

[2] The Regency Bill was passed on February 4, 1811.

My sentiments coincide with those of His Royal Highness. I think it would not be advisable to close the door of Parliament until it shall be ascertained that this attack is not likely to lead to any immediately fatal issue.

I am sorry that I happened to be out when you called this morning. I had just walked through my garden to the Park, and returned almost immediately after your departure.[1]

LADY HESTER STANHOPE[2] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Nebech, upon the banks of the Bosphorus August* 29, 1811

Mr. Canning[3] having threatened to write to your Lordship, I take the liberty of addressing you upon a subject I am anxious should not be misrepresented.

You are aware, my Lord, that I left England on account of my health, which, though mended, is by no means re-established, and I always suffer extremely from cold. During the course of last winter I had often expressed a wish that it were possible I could visit either Italy or the south of France, which, coming to the ears of M. La Tour Maubourg, the French *Chargé d'Affaires* at this

[1] Add. MSS. 37295 f. 480.

[2] Lady Hester Lucy Stanhope (1776-1839), eldest daughter of Charles Stanhope, afterwards third Earl Stanhope, was the companion of her uncle, William Pitt, from 1803 until his death. She travelled extensively in the East.

[3] Stratford Canning, afterwards Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe (1786-1880), at this time Minister Plenipotentiary at Constantinople.

LADY HESTER STANHOPE
From a lithograph

place, he was so good as to hint through a third person he should be most happy to give me every assistance in his power to accomplish this object. Had Mr. Adair[1] been here, or any man of known character and liberal opinions, I should in the first instance have communicated this circumstance to him, and fairly told him it was my intention to take advantage of the opportunity which now presented itself of making the acquaintance of M. Maubourg, and requesting him to forward my views in the manner he thought most respectable to both parties. But Mr. Canning was young and inexperienced, full of zeal, but full of prejudice. I guessed therefore what might be the line of conduct he would pursue on such an occasion. Respecting as I do his many virtues, I did not wish to quarrel with him, or appear openly to disregard his authority, or publicly to ridicule the very idea of any person presuming to doubt my patriotism; because I despise the idea of war with individuals, and also cannot but lament a fault too *common* to most of our public men, that of seeing things in the light they wish them to be, and not as they are, and trying to impose this fallacy upon the public mind, which, when discovered, must sooner or later destroy the degree of confidence they ought to possess.

The above reasons decided me to see M. Maubourg privately, who is also very young for his situation, but which his talents fully qualify him to fill. Nothing can have been more candid, more

[1] James (afterwards Sir James) Adair (1763-1855) was Canning's predecessor at Constantinople.

honourable, and more delicate than his conduct upon this occasion, and he lost no time in writing to Paris for passports, and his answer may be expected every day. Not long ago Mr. Canning's spy, who I saw was pursuing me for some time, communicated to his employer that he had seen M. Maubourg and myself walking together upon the coast of Asia. This led Mr. Canning to enquire into the business, the whole of which I communicated to him, and my reasons for having kept it a secret. He has thought it his duty to take leave of me, and also to forbid any of those persons belonging to him to visit me, which, as far as it affects my comfort, is of no consequence, as they are all horribly dull (except Mr. Pisani, who is a man of merit and information) ; and as far as it relates to my politics, I flatter myself that it is not in the power of Mr. Canning or any other person to cast any reflection upon them that would be credited in this or any other country, much less in my own.

Although it is very evident that Mr. Canning has not been educated in your Lordship's school of gallantry, yet I give him full credit for acting from the most upright and most conscientious principles ; and if his zeal has carried him a little too far, there is no one so willing to forgive it as I am, or so little inclined to attempt to turn him from his duty. Affectation or fear have in no degree influenced my line of conduct towards him, and if I have acted with *more moderation* than is usual to me it proceeds from what may (though true) sound like conceit to confess—the persuasion that

Mr. Canning and I do not stand upon equal grounds, and that he is by no means a match for me, were I determined to revenge what, to others, carries the appearance of insult. But as he is both a political and religious methodist, after having appeared to doubt my love for my country he will next presume to teach me my duty to my God.

Before I conclude I must make one petition to your Lordship, not to receive Mr. Canning with dog bows, or wry faces, or allow the fine ladies to toss him in a blanket; the best recompense for his services would be to appoint him Commander-in-Chief at home, and Ambassador-Extraordinary to the various societies for the suppression of vice and cultivation of patriotism. The latter consists in putting oneself into greater convulsions than the Dervishes at the mention of Buonaparte's name.[1]

Europe was in a most unsettled state. The war had drained its resources, and almost every country would willingly have made peace, if satisfactory terms had been forthcoming from Napoleon. Sweden and Prussia actually went so far as to invite an alliance with France, which in both instances rejected the proposal. Austria was bankrupt, and its Government paper at a discount of ninety per cent. Russia was disinclined to do more than stand on the defensive. Alone Britain and the Bourbon party in Spain were eager to continue the war.

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 77.

COUNT MUNSTER *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Most secret — *Clarges Street*
October 22, 1811

The messenger who yesterday brought despatches from Vienna to your Lordship's office has been detained at Berlin by Baron Ompteda, for the purpose of conveying his report on the highly important occurrences which have taken place at Berlin from the 20th to the 25th September.

They are of such a nature that His Royal Highness the Prince Regent has commanded me to give, without loss of time, a summary abstract of their contents to your Excellency.

Baron Ompteda first refers to the declaration which the Prussian Chancellor Hardenberg[1] has made to the French Minister at Berlin, on the determination of the King of Prussia to resist any attack which might be made against him. He then proceeds to state that the evasive answer at first given by Buonaparte had been followed by a more decisive one, delivered by the French Minister to the King of Prussia in an audience on the 24th September.

Baron Ompteda having requested an interview with Baron Hardenberg for the purpose of being informed of the real state of things, he obtained the following account from the Prime Minister.

[1] Charles Augustus, Baron (afterwards Prince) von Hardenberg (1750-1822), after holding minor posts at Hanover and Brunswick, became in 1791 Prussian Minister of State. On the accession of Frederich William III. he was displaced by Haugwitz, but was Foreign Minister in 1804-1805, when he retired. In 1810 he was appointed Chancellor, and took an active and brilliant part in the War of Liberation.

That the Court of Prussia, in order to ascertain the real intention of France, had in the month of May offered to conclude an alliance with that power, which, however, had been of a nature to secure the perfect independence of Prussia, on which account he had foreseen that it would not be accepted.

In order to prove that Prussia had not really intended to conclude this alliance, Baron Hardenberg mentioned that one of the conditions was: "that the Prussian army should always remain united, in a *corps d'armée*, and under the command of a Prussian general, and that this army should never be employed but for the sole purpose of defending the Prussian dominions."

Baron Hardenberg then proceeded to state that this proposition of Prussia had not been favoured with an answer from Buonaparte; that, however, the French had continued their preparations for war on the Prussian frontier with more activity than heretofore, and that Prussia, on her part, had put herself in a state of defence; that this had at last produced the declaration of which Baron Ompteda had given an account in his despatch of the 10th September; that at last a French messenger had brought, on the 20th September, instructions to Count Marsan, in consequence of which he had requested an audience with the King; that Buonaparte had declared in very flattering terms "that he had been prevented from giving an answer to the proposition of an alliance with Prussia, by being engaged in negotiations with Russia which were not yet terminated; that, however, in order to give to the King of Prussia

a proof of his friendship, he should soon send a messenger to carry instructions for the purpose of entering into a negotiation on the proposed alliance, and that the conditions he was going to offer would be a proof of his sentiments towards Prussia; that, in the meanwhile, he must insist that all preparations for war be discontinued; that he did not think himself offended by them, but that his honour and the preservation of public tranquillity made it absolutely necessary that they should; that in case this was *not agreed to instantly his Minister had orders to quit Berlin and the Prince of Eckmühl,*[1] *to march into the Prussian dominions.*"

Baron Hardenberg added to this statement that, considering the state of complete uncertainty in which the Court of Prussia was left in regard to the resolutions of the Court of St. Petersburg, and since they had not even been informed of the effect produced by the scene which had taken place at Paris on the 15th August, there had remained no other part to be taken *than to accept the proposition of France, to enter into a negotiation.* That, however, Baron Ompteda might *firmly rely upon this, that the proposed alliance would not be concluded;* that the armaments would be discontinued, in appearance only, in order to gain time, but that under hand the preparations should be continued, for which purpose Baron Hardenberg had repeated his request for obtaining arms.

[1] Louis Nicolas Davoust, Prince of Eckmühl (1770-1823), Marshal of France. He was one of the greatest of the generals of Napoleon, to whom he remained faithful to the end. During the Hundred Days he acted as Minister of War.

The French Minister having desired that the Court of Russia might be speedily informed of this negotiation, a Prussian messenger was to be despatched on the 26th September for that purpose. It is likewise at the desire of the French Minister that Baron Hardenberg has caused an article to be inserted in the Berlin *Gazette*, of which Baron Ompteda has sent a copy, which states, " that the assurances which the King had received of the amicable disposition of the neighbouring powers had induced His Majesty to suspend the warlike preparations which the former circumstances seemed to have required." This despatch of Baron Ompteda was accompanied by a letter from Colonel Gneisenau[1] dated 24th September. It agrees in general with the tenor of Ompteda's report, but it contains some observations which appear to me to be very alarming. Mr. de Gneisenau informs me that his advice has been to refuse at once the discontinuing of the preparations for war, and to forward them with redoubled vigour. He states that, contrary to his opinion, measures had been adopted for gaining time, by which in reality time would be lost ; that the adoption of his plan would have obliged the King to leave Berlin immediately ; that His Majesty had considered this as an act which would cause the instantaneous breaking out of the war, the responsibility of which he wished to avoid.

[1] Count Neidhard Gneisenau (1760-1829), Prussian Field-Marshal. He defended the fortress of Colberg against Napoleon, and in 1813 commanded the retreat of the Russian and Prussian forces after Lützen and Breslau. He served under Blücher in the later campaigns against the French.

Mr. de Gneisenau then proceeds to say : "*It is certain that we can never become the allies of France, and that we shall resist any attack made against us ; but much depends on the more or less powerful means of resistance.*" He then states that his plan for fortifying a position in front of Spandau could not be put into execution, since it had been decided to leave to the enemy the choice of the time for beginning the war ; that this circumstance produced a still more serious consequence, that of making it very difficult to save "*the King's person, and that, if the movements of the enemy's troops should render his departure impossible, a Treaty of Submission to France would be easily foreseen. This is the only case,*" he adds, "*in which we may foresee the possibility of Prussia appertaining to France.* It is for this reason that the protracted presence of the King at Berlin is so dangerous to the good cause."

In regard to the works having been suspended, Mr. de Gneisenau informs me that the people employed about those which were nearly completed were secretly at work for similar purposes, in other quarters.

I have further to inform your Lordship that I have received letters from General Nugent, by which it appears that he expected to reach Vienna about the 29th September. I must, however, defer the communication of this letter till I shall be able to read to your Excellency the despatches from Vienna, which are not yet deciphered. They will probably be of great importance, since I find that Baron Jacobi, who

has been sent from Berlin to Vienna, has made his report to his Court by means of Count Hardenberg ciphers.

The present crisis in which Prussia is placed is certainly alarming, yet it appears that the Prussian Cabinet has found means to gain time, since no tidings of the commencement of hostilities have been received in England. The circumstance of a messenger having been despatched from Berlin to St. Petersburg may lead us to hope that Prussia and Russia will remain united, and that peace will either be preserved or a common war be declared.

Considering these circumstances, His Royal Highness the Prince Regent has been pleased to mention to me that it might be a proper moment for His Royal Highness to write to the King of Prussia, and requests your Lordship to take this idea into your serious consideration, since if it is to take place His Royal Highness thinks that it should be done without loss of time.

The Vienna despatches will be ready in the course of to-morrow.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SPENCER PERCEVAL

Private *Apsley House*
November 27, 1811

Just as I reached Oatlands[2] this morning at half-past twelve, the Princess arrived from Windsor, which event prevented me from seeing the Prince until a very late hour. I am but this moment arrived in town, and have had no dinner,

[1] Add. MSS. 37293 f. 161.
[2] The residence of the Duke and Duchess of York.

and am so much tired (partly from the extreme heat of the rooms at Oatlands), that I should have no power of rendering justice to any subject of public business to-night, even if I could reach you in any reasonable time.

The subject of my audience to-day was Sweden ; but the Prince generally stated to me the same ideas which I have already mentioned to you, with much increased earnestness, and, indeed, in some points, with considerable force. He informed me that he had seen the Queen yesterday, and that Her Majesty entirely approved of all his views respecting the King, the Household, and the settlement for the Queen and Princess.

He continues to think that the dignity of the King and the comfort of his situation will be best provided for by a separate establishment, under a new office of the highest rank ;

That the Regent should have the whole Civil List, and the full state as well as power of the Crown, and should resign his allowance as Prince of Wales ;

That the Queen should have an independent allowance and the Princesses the same. He considers this part of the arrangement to be inseparable from the settlement of the Regency on a permanent basis. He will state many strong considerations in favour of his plan, and appears intent on carrying it into execution.

He said to-day that after the discussion with you shall have taken place (unless you agreed) he should wish to receive your propositions in writing, in order that he might answer them. I rather

understood this to be a proof of his determination to abide by his own ideas, than a symptom of any intention to depart from them in consequence of what he might receive in writing from you.

As I suppose you will pass the greater part of to-morrow at Oatlands, I would fix Friday at two for the Cabinet on the other points in my department, if that day should be convenient.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SPENCER PERCEVAL

Private *Dorking : December* 2, 1811

The Prince Regent sent an order to me, which reached me at this place last night, directing me to attend His Royal Highness at Oatlands at twelve to-day. When I saw His Royal Highness this day he began by asking me whether I had seen the paper which he had received from you, respecting the new settlement of the Regency. I said (as you know I must have said) that I had not seen the paper, but that I was acquainted with the substance of its contents. He then communicated your paper to me, and said that he intended to state his ideas in writing on the whole subject ; that he was aware of the impropriety of desiring me to offer any advice in the present state of the question, but that he wished to declare his sentiments freely to me. I thought it was my duty to inform His Royal Highness that I could not, in this stage of the discussion, offer any opinion on the subject either of your paper or of his intended answer, and as this sentiment agreed with his own feeling, he did not ask my opinion

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 41.

from me, but he proceeded to express nearly the same view of the subject which he had stated to you and to me on former occasions.

I collected from His Royal Highness's conversation that your paper had produced no change in his opinion, and that he entertained a strong persuasion that his statement would have great weight and would satisfy you that you had taken an erroneous view of the question.

I understood from His Royal Highness that his statement in writing was not likely to reach you sooner than to-morrow (Tuesday) night or Wednesday morning. He informed me that he would send a copy to the Lord Chancellor, and that he would send me another copy. I should be glad to know when you propose to assemble a Cabinet for the consideration of your paper, and His Royal Highness' statement. I conclude that it cannot be sooner than Wednesday. I shall not be in town to-morrow.[1]

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: December 3, 1811

I thank you for your letter, and regret extremely that His Royal Highness continues so attached to his first opinion respecting the new settlement of the Regency.

I had called a Cabinet for this day at two o'clock, but I did so under the impression that I should personally have received the Prince's observations upon my paper. Having, however,

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 50.

heard from Mr. Adam[1] last night that I was not to expect them until to-morrow morning, I had, therefore, determined to postpone the Cabinet until two to-morrow. I trust you will be able to attend it, and also to take a Cabinet dinner with me on the same day.[2]

From the general tenor of Wellesley's letters during the period he was at the Foreign Office, it is clear that he was not contented with the policy of the Government, while for the Prime Minister he had a contempt that he did not trouble to disguise. Never, owing to his autocratic attitude, on very intimate terms with his colleagues, as time passed his relations with them became more and more strained, until in 1811 he rarely attended the Cabinet councils, and managed his own department without consulting anyone. He was angry at the way in which the war was conducted, and indignant that no move was made in the direction of Catholic Emancipation.[3] Finally, on January 12, he tendered his resignation to the Prince Regent, who, however, was anxious to retain his services, and pressed him to remain.

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: January 17, 1812

It is with great regret that I have just received

[1] William Adam (1751-1839), Attorney-General to the Prince of Wales.

[2] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 51.

[3] *See* Wellesley's Memorandum on the causes of his retirement from the Ministry, *infra* p. 74.

from Lord Bathurst the communication which you desired him to make to me. It would have taken me completely by surprise, had it not been for what His Royal Highness the Prince Regent told me this morning, which had prepared me to expect such a communication. I understand that your determination is too completely fixed to give me any hopes of a change in it, and consequently I have nothing to do, except, in expressing my thanks for your desire to arrange the time both for acting upon this determination and for making it known in the way least likely to embarrass His Royal Highness' Government, to express my deep regret that you should have found it necessary to adopt such a determination at all.

Your disposition, which Bathurst also informed me of, to leave your son to act entirely as he may choose upon this occasion, I receive most gladly as a mark of kindness to myself, for which I am very grateful. I shall, therefore, unless I should hear from you to the contrary, feel myself at liberty, in due time, to endeavour to prevail upon Mr. Wellesley to continue to hold his present situation at the Treasury, in which I am persuaded he may at once be very usefully occupied in introducing himself into a general knowledge of the course of public business, and also be affording me the most essential assistance.[1]

SPENCER PERCEVAL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: February 7, 1812

I have great satisfaction in acquainting you that

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 175.

at an audience with the Prince this day I suggested to him that he could not begin his unrestricted Regency with a more gracious act than that of raising your brother, Lord Wellington, to the dignity of an earl,[1] and that at the same time he should send a message to Parliament acquainting them with his intention, and expressing the hope that Parliament would [allow] His Royal Highness to grant to Lord Wellington the means of better supporting his additional honours.

The Prince highly approved of the idea, and has authorised me to acquaint Lord Wellington with his intention *immediately*, though he thinks the message to Parliament ought to be withheld till the restrictions are at an end.

I have lost no time in communicating this to you, which I am sure you will, on public grounds as well as private, entirely approve.

You will, of course, perceive that the intention should not transpire here till the Prince's notification of it to Parliament.[2]

LORD ELDON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

February 18, 1812

The Prince Regent having been pleased to make the communication to your Lordship, together with which this is sent to you, I am anxious to state that it is in obedience to his commands that the paper, signed by His Royal Highness, is in the handwriting of the Chancellor, the Prince having

[1] As a reward for the capture of Ciudad Rodrigo, Wellington was created an Earl on February 10.

[2] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 183.

thought it more consistent with his regard for you that the pen of the Chancellor rather than that of any other person should be employed on this occasion. I beg to assure you that every personal feeling, which I have long had, makes it impossible for me not to regret the circumstance which has now taken place.

I communicated to Mr. Perceval with all possible fidelity what your Lordship stated to me yesterday, and I find that you and I have agreed in noticing to the Prince the only circumstance in which there was any material difference of understanding between us.[1]

The Prince Regent *to* The Marquess Wellesley

February 18, 1812

The Prince Regent, having commanded the Chancellor's attendance upon him this morning, has learnt that the communication made by Marquess Wellesley to the Chancellor yesterday has, in obedience to his former commands, been stated to Mr. Perceval.

In the circumstances of difficulty and embarrassment in which the Prince is now placed, it is with great and sincere regret that, whilst he assures Marquess Wellesley of his high personal regard, he feels it unavoidable to communicate to him that he cannot withhold his acceptance of his Lordship's resignation of the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and that he is therefore now ready to receive the seals of that office.[2]

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 197.
[2] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 195.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* LORD ELDON

Apsley House: February 18, 1812

I should have received your Lordship's kind letter of this date with additional pleasure, if it had contained no expression of regret. The Prince Regent could not confer so acceptable a testimony of his regard upon me as that announced by your Lordship, and I request your Lordship to be assured that your esteem for me could not be manifested in any manner so satisfactory to my sentiments as by your communication of the gracious determination of His Royal Highness to withdraw the rigour of his recent commands, and to release me from a situation already painful, and which must soon have become ignominious.

The circumstance of difference to which your Lordship refers, respecting the Prince Regent's communications to you and me on the subject of Mr. Perceval's appointment on Saturday last, is certainly extraordinary.

I have no doubt of the fidelity of your Lordship's statement, and, upon the most mature deliberation and reflection, I continue in the positive certainty that His Royal Highness did assure me, in the most distinct terms, that no such appointment had taken place.

I enclose a copy of my answer to the Prince Regent's note.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE PRINCE REGENT

February 18, 1812

Lord Wellesley returns his humble acknowledg-

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 193.

ment to Your Royal Highness for your gracious acceptance of his resignation of the office of Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, which he has continued to hold merely in obedience to Your Royal Highness' special and repeated commands.

Lord Wellesley is persuaded that Your Royal Highness has hitherto withholden your assent to his earnest request of being permitted to lay the seals of that office at your feet, from motives of the most condescending indulgence towards his humble services. He now receives this signal act of grace as the strongest testimony of Your Royal Highness' benevolence and favour, and as a most timely and happy relief from a state of the most painful difficulty and embarrassment.

He will wait on Your Royal Highness with the seals at any time that you may be pleased to command.[1]

Memorandum

[*February* 1812]

Lord Wellesley expressed his intention to resign because his general opinions for a long time past on various important questions had not sufficient weight to justify him towards the public, or towards his own character in continuing in office, and because he had no hope of obtaining from the Cabinet (as then constituted) a greater portion of attention than he had already experienced.

Lord Wellesley's objections to remaining in the Cabinet arose, in a great degree, from the *narrow* and imperfect scale on which the efforts in the

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 199.

Peninsula were conducted. It was always stated to him by Mr. Perceval that it *was impracticable* to *enlarge* that system. The Cabinet followed Mr. Perceval implicitly. Lord Wellesley thought it *was perfectly practicable* to *extend* the plan in the Peninsula, and that it was neither safe nor honest towards this country or the allies to continue the present contracted scheme. No hope existed of converting Mr. Perceval, or any of his colleagues. No alternative, therefore, remained for Lord Wellesley but to resign, or to submit to be the instrument of a system which he never advised, and which he could not approve.

Lord Wellesley had repeatedly, with great reluctance, yielded his opinions to the Cabinet on many other important points. He was sincerely convinced by experience that in every such instance he had submitted to opinions more incorrect than his own, and had sacrificed to the object of accommodation and temporary harmony more than he could justify in point of strict public duty. In fact, he was convinced by experience that the Cabinet neither possessed ability nor knowledge to *devise* a good plan, nor temper and discernment to *adopt* what he now thought necessary, unless Mr. Perceval should concur with Lord Wellesley. To Mr. Perceval's judgment or attainments Lord Wellesley (under the same experience) could not pay any deference, without injury to the public service.

With these views and sentiments, on the 12th of January Lord Wellesley merely desired permission to withdraw from the Cabinet, not

requiring any change in his own situation, and imploring no other favour than the facility of resignation. His plain request was notified to the Prince Regent and to Mr. Perceval, as nearly as possible at the same moment of time, with the expression of Lord Wellesley's wish, that the *precise* time of his resignation might be accommodated to the pleasure of His Royal Highness, and to the convenience of Mr. Perceval, as soon as the restrictions should expire.

The Prince Regent received this notification with many gracious expressions of regret; and Mr. Perceval, *in writing*, used expressions of regret, and also of *thanks*, for the *manner* in which Lord Wellesley had signified his wish to resign.

Mr. Perceval, *without any communication* to Lord Wellesley, instantly attempted to induce the Prince Regent to remove him before the expiration of the restrictions, and repeatedly urged the attempt with great earnestness, severally proposing Lord Moira, Sidmouth, or some of his party to supersede Lord Wellesley without an hour of delay. Mr. Perceval *never gave any intimation* to Lord Wellesley of these proceedings, nor even of his wish for Lord Wellesley's immediate retirement. The Prince Regent still pressing Lord Wellesley to retain the seals, he submitted to His Royal Highness' commands, declaring at the same time his anxious desire to be liberated as soon as His Royal Highness should establish his Government.

When it appeared, at the expiration of the restrictions, that the Prince Regent intended to

continue Mr. Perceval's Government, Lord Wellesley again tendered the seals to His Royal Highness with increased earnestness. On that occasion, being informed that His Royal Highness was still at liberty, and was resolved to form his Cabinet according to His Royal Highness' own views, and being *commanded* to *state his opinions* on the subject, Lord Wellesley declared that, in his judgment, the Cabinet ought to be formed, first on an intermediary principle respecting the Roman Catholic claims, equally exempt from the extremes of instant, unqualified concession, and of peremptory eternal exclusion; and, secondly, on an understanding that the war should be conducted with adequate vigour. Lord Wellesley said that he personally was ready to serve *with* Mr. Perceval on such a basis, that he never again would serve *under* Mr. Perceval in any circumstances. He said that he would serve under Lord Moira, or Lord Holland, on the proposed principles, but that he desired no office, and entertained no other wish than to be instrumental in forming such an administration for the Prince Regent as should be consistent with His Royal Highness' honour, conciliatory towards Ireland, and equal to the conduct of the war, on a scale of *sufficient extent*. He made no exception to any Prime Minister but Mr. Perceval, whom he considered to be incompetent to fill that office, although sufficiently qualified for inferior stations. He offered to act under any other person approved by His Royal Highness, but he stated that his own views rendered him much more anxious to resign instantly.

The Prince Regent commanded Lord Wellesley to continue until His Royal Highness should have communicated with Mr. Perceval through the Lord Chancellor. Lord Wellesley stated that such a communication must prove useless, but submitted to His Royal Highness' earnest desire. Two days afterwards Lord Wellesley received through the Lord Chancellor the Prince Regent's acceptance of his resignation, and accordingly delivered the seals to His Royal Highness on the 19th of February, 1812.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 201.

BOOK VI

WELLESLEY'S ATTEMPT TO FORM A MINISTRY. 1812

BOOK VI

WELLESLEY'S ATTEMPT TO FORM A MINISTRY. 1812

Wellesley replaced by Castlereagh : Catholic Emancipation : Grattan's motion : Assassination of Spencer Perceval : Liverpool's overtures to Wellesley and Canning : They decline to join Liverpool : Defeat and resignation of the Government : Wellesley's negotiations : Canning's adherence : Liverpool and his colleagues decline to serve with Wellesley : Earl Grey and Lord Grenville decline : Lord Moira's adherence : Wellesley's failure : His explanation : Misunderstandings.

VERY soon after Wellesley had retired from the Ministry, where, in spite of his previous refusal, he was succeeded by Castlereagh, the Catholic question, in which he was so interested, came to the fore, and he and Canning again fought side by side, supporting valiantly the cause of Emancipation.

A debate on the Catholic question took place in the House of Lords on April 21, 1812, and Wellesley seized the opportunity to express himself strongly. "I do not wish to speak with disrespect of that Protestant establishment in Ireland whose security is so readily believed in this country, nor to cast any reflection upon those who preside over that establishment," he said, in the course of one of his speeches; "yet I know that the true state

of the Church of Ireland in a very great degree consists of bishops without clergy, churches without clergymen, and clergymen without churches; parishes of considerable extent without clergymen, church, or glebe; many parishes frequently consolidated into one, with a common church too remote for the parishioners to resort to. Can a Church so circumstanced possess internal strength for its own defence against the mass of opposition excited against it? and is not that strength less likely to be increased by arming itself with violence against the mass of discontent set in array by the intolerance of the laws enacted for its support?"

GEORGE CANNING *to* MR. SHARP

Sunning Hill: April 5, 1812

By a letter which I have just received from Lord Boringdon[1] I learn that you had expressed to him Mr. Grattan's desire to have some communication with me on the subject of his intended motion; and that he (Lord Boringdon) had told you that he believed that I was to be in town to-morrow.

I had said, when last I saw Lord Boringdon, that I should be in town the beginning of the week, but *you* will not be surprised to hear that the fine weather which began to show itself yesterday after a week of rain and consequent confinement to the house had determined me, before I received

[1] John Parker, second Baron Boringdon (1772-1840), a supporter of Pitt and Canning. He was created Earl of Morley, 1815.

Lord Boringdon's letter, to prolong my stay in the country till Thursday.

I shall be at Gloucester Lodge that evening. In the meantime, if Mr. Grattan should do me the honour to wish to make any communication to me, perhaps you would kindly undertake to be the channel of it.

I am at G. Ellis's, and the address is Sunning Hill, Staines.

P.S. Possibly it may save time and trouble if I state to you shortly my view of the *policy* on which a motion respecting the Catholics should be formed, begging you to consider such statement is made to you in confidence, but with perfect liberty to mention to *Mr. Grattan* any part of it that it may appear to you worth while that he should know, and that he may be desirous of knowing.

The obvious division of opinions upon the Catholic subject is into :

1. Those who would give all, and immediately ;
2. Those who would withhold all, and for ever ; and
3. Those who would give, but with qualifications either of time or mode.

It is equally obvious that it is out of this third class that recruits are to be sought to the one or the other of the two former opinions. And the chance which either of these extreme opinions has of obtaining recruits out of this middle class will be in proportion to the degree in which they can bring themselves to approximate to the middle opinion.

In this view the initiative upon such a question is necessarily a great disadvantage. If Perceval were to *bring forward* a motion founded upon his opinions and fairly expressing it, he must be left in a minority. But having only to meet a motion founded on the opposite opinion, he will have the benefit of the votes, not of all those only who agree with him (which are a very small number indeed), but of all who see, or can find, a ground of difference from the motion proposed.

This, I say, is a great disadvantage, but it is an unavoidable one. All that can be done is to lessen it as much as possible by shaping the motion (so far as principle and pledges will allow) in the manner best estimated to avoid some of the plainest and most notorious grounds of objection.

The objection which I feel to the accustomed motion—for referring the petition to a committee of the whole House—is this: that if you carried it you would not be advanced a step—except into difficulties. If you carried it, I mean, *without a struggle*—to carry *it* or *any* thing else against the whole strength of Government, would, of course, be to carry *every* thing, to change the Government, and so to forward the Catholic Cause; but *that* is out of the question. And speaking of it as a mere parliamentary measure, I so little think that carrying a committee would be a good thing for the cause, that if I were in Perceval's situation, *with Perceval's opinion*, I would *give* you the committee, professing to reserve my opposition till I saw what sort of plan you had to propose in it. I cannot conceive a situation of

more embarrassment than that of an opposition called upon to frame and bring forward in public discussion a plan for conciliating opposite interests and jarring prejudices, with a body like the Catholics whom they must try to satisfy on the one hand, one like the Church of England whom they must take care not to alarm on the other, and with the whole weight of Government and its majorities watching, and having to choose a favourable moment to interfere and overwhelm them.

What would not be good to carry, is (in my judgment) not good to propose. For though the objections which I have suggested may not be objections capable of being stated in debate, though Perceval may not adopt the policy which I have described, yet that which would be the main ground of such a policy, the certainty that a committee of the whole House on the Catholic question cannot be carried (except by Government, or except as overthrowing the Government) to any useful purpose, is perfectly plain and intelligible and will influence many votes, even if it is not put forward in many speeches.

The result seems to be that any motion would have the best chance of success (or at least the best chance of defeating very many of the topics of opposition to it), which should go rather to impose upon the executive Government the task of bringing forward the Catholic claims, than to take them out of the hands of the Government into those of the House of Commons ; to express the sense of Parliament that they ought to be considered in the way most likely to give them a fair hearing, rather

than to point out a committee of the House of Commons as the fit mode of considering them.

My motion (which I communicated with you some weeks ago) was a resolution something like that which Fox moved on the Slave Trade, which was followed the next session by a Bill brought in by Government for the abolition. But I mention this only as an explanation of my meaning, not as the *only* form into which such a motion might be embodied.

The great point, I think, is to steer clear of the difficulties of mode and time, which is to be done by not only admitting, but contending, that the question is one for executive Government, that they only can prepare the details, that Parliament can do no more in the first instance than approve the principle and enjoin the duty.

And this change from the form of the motions of former years seems naturally prescribed by the new circumstance of a petition to the House—as well as to Parliament.

I must here end this most disproportioned postscript.[1]

Spencer Perceval was assassinated in the lobby of the House of Commons on May 11. The Ministry, disorganised by the suddenness of the blow it had experienced, was anxious to remain in office, under the leadership of Lord Liverpool, and the Prince Regent was in favour of that course. As it stood, however, the Government was not

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 316.

strong enough, and Liverpool made overtures to Wellesley and Canning, in the hope of retaining their active support and co-operation.

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Gloucester Lodge*
May 16, 1812

I entirely approve of your determination to meet any proposal by the demand of an audience of the Prince Regent.

But I ought not to omit to say that I should not wish to be comprehended in a *positive refusal* of any proposal, *solely on the ground* of any *specific distribution of offices*.

You know my wishes as to what relates to yourself too well to make it necessary to repeat them. But I do not think *that ground* of an absolute refusal, in the present state of the country, tenable.

I write in great haste, in a moment stolen from company at dinner. But as something may pass to-night, I thought it not right to let your messenger return without this short statement of my opinion on this point.

I will expect you here to-morrow morning, according to your appointment.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Gloucester Lodge: May 16, 1812

There is nothing that can give me so much satisfaction, "under all the circumstances," as to

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 324.

find either that your intelligence had been unfounded, or that (as you apprehend) some alteration had taken place in the intention of applying to us.

What I feared (and that fear dictated my note to you), was an attempt on the part of the Government *to make a case*, an attempt which, having succeeded so fully against the Opposition in February, I thought they might be induced to try against *us* in May. Situated as the Government is, it can stand only either upon an accession of strength or upon showing that it has tried to gain such accession, and has been unreasonably refused. They would unquestionably prefer the latter ground, and I should wish that we could avoid furnishing it.

I never imagined that you would *otherwise* implicate me by anything that you might say, than as an answer to a joint overture might be construed by those whose interest it was so to construe it, to implicate both the parties to whom that overture was made.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Gloucester Lodge: May 17, 1812

Lord Liverpool goes from me to call on you. I have made a Minute of his communication to me, which I have read over and corrected in his presence, and a copy of which I will send you as soon as I can transcribe it. In it I say:

"I thought it better to receive Lord Liverpool's communication just as he gave it to me, and to

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 326.

defer making any remarks, or giving any answer to it, until I should have communicated upon it with my friends."

I earnestly advise you to do the same.

Liverpool carries this note, and I therefore can add no more.

When shall I see you ?[1]

Minute by GEORGE CANNING

Gloucester Lodge : May 17, 1812

Lord Liverpool stated to me that he was commanded by His Royal Highness the Prince Regent to make to me the following communication :

That upon the melancholy event of Mr. Perceval's death, His Royal Highness being desirous of continuing his administration upon its present basis, was desirous also of strengthening it as much as possible by associating to it such persons in public life as agreed most nearly and generally in the principles upon which public affairs had been conducted.

That with this view His Royal Highness naturally looked to Lord Wellesley and to me.

That he (Lord Liverpool) was authorised to express the disposition of all his colleagues to act with Lord Wellesley and me, under an arrangement which might be at once consistent with their own honour and duty, and honourable and satisfactory to us.

That with respect to Lord Castlereagh it was fair that it should be distinctly understood that the situation in which he stands, both in this

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 334.

Government and in the House of Commons, was to be preserved to him.

That with respect to official arrangements, he (Lord Liverpool) would not have been the bearer of any proposition to me but one which was understood as comprising my friends.

In answer to a question put by me, Lord Liverpool stated that his colleagues were desirous that he should be appointed to the office of First Lord of the Treasury, and that this desire was known to the Prince Regent when His Royal Highness commanded Lord Liverpool to undertake this communication.

Lord Liverpool added that he was ready to answer any other enquiry that I might wish to make, or to clear up anything that he might have imperfectly explained.

I said that I thought it better to receive his communication just as he gave it to me, and to defer making any remark or giving any answer whatever until I should have communicated it to my friends, Lord Liverpool himself undertaking to see Lord Wellesley.

I would only therefore ask whether I was to consider the opinion and policy of the Government as remaining altogether unchanged upon the question relating to the laws affecting the Roman Catholics ?

Lord Liverpool answered that his own opinions upon this subject remained unchanged, and that he was not aware that those of his colleagues had undergone any change.

I then wrote this Minute in Lord Liverpool's

presence, which he read over, and suggested such corrections as appeared to him necessary for making it perfectly accurate.

GEORGE CANNING.[1]

Minute by THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Apsley House: May 17, 1812

Lord Liverpool came to me immediately after his visit to Mr. Canning, and remained with me for about half an hour. Soon after Lord Liverpool's departure I received the annexed paper from Mr. Canning.[2]

Lord Liverpool's conversation with me was substantially the same as that which is described to have passed with Mr. Canning. Any difference which appeared arose necessarily from my questions and observations, which were made without knowledge of what had passed between Lord Liverpool and Mr. Canning. After receiving Lord Liverpool's verbal communication nearly in the terms stated by Mr. Canning, I enquired

1st. What was to be the policy of the Government with relation to the Roman Catholics?

To this question Lord Liverpool returned the same answer stated in Mr. Canning's paper to have been returned to a similar question.

2ndly. I observed to Lord Liverpool that he was apprised of my opinion, that our efforts in the Peninsula had been conducted on an inadequate and imperfect scale, which could not be expected to accomplish the ultimate objects of the war in

[1] Add MSS. 37296 f. 340.
[2] George Canning's Minute.

that quarter; that I had for a long time considered an extension of our system in the Peninsula to be indispensably necessary, and easily practicable; that I was aware of the impropriety (in my present situation) of urging any detailed questions to Lord Liverpool on this point; but that I mentioned it now because it must form a principal consideration in my answer to the proposition which he had brought to me.

Lord Liverpool said that he did not agree in my opinion respecting the scale of the efforts which we had hitherto made in the Peninsula; that there never had been any limit to our exertions in that quarter, but what arose out of the question of practicability (that is, the means of increasing and supplying our armies), and that he had never heard any specific plan by which those means might have been carried farther, though the subject had been often most anxiously considered in my presence; that circumstances had occurred since my resignation which did not then exist, and into the particulars of which it would not be proper for him to enter at that time, which might enable Government to extend, to a certain degree, the military operations in the Peninsula, and the system of himself and his colleagues would be, as he contended they had always been, to make the greatest efforts in the cause of the Peninsula which the resources of the country rendered possible.

3rdly. I enquired whether all the general constituent parts of the present Cabinet were to remain?

He believed it was known to me that some of the members of the Cabinet had been long desirous of retiring, and would be ready therefore now to afford facilities to any new arrangement.

In answer to a question put by me respecting Lord Sidmouth and his friends, he said they would remain.

4thly. I stated to Lord Liverpool that I made no enquiry respecting the proposed distribution and allocation of offices, because that circumstance would not constitute the basis of my decision upon the proposition which he had brought to me.

Lord Liverpool observed that the distribution of offices was a matter open to future adjustment, to be regulated for the honour of all parties.

5thly. When Lord Liverpool informed me that *the leading* in the House of Commons was to be preserved to Lord Castlereagh, I remarked that in any situation which I might ever hold in any administration, I should feel great obligation to any member of the Government who would undertake that charge, which *was called the leading* in the House of Parliament in which I sat, although I was fully aware of the great importance which that charge necessarily conveyed to the person who exercised it, and of the great influence which it must give to him in the general administration and patronage of the Government.

6thly. I desired to know whether all those persons now designated by the name of "The Opposition" were to be excluded from the proposed scheme of administration?

Lord Liverpool answered that no principle of

exclusion was intended, but that he was not authorised to make any proposal to any persons of the description which I had mentioned.

7thly. Considering the course which Lord Liverpool had observed in making the communication, I asked him whether he applied to me by command of the Prince Regent, as a part of Mr. Canning's suite? I reminded Lord Liverpool of the constant and unabated exertions which I had made to open every avenue for the return of Mr. Canning to the public service, remarking at the same time that I never had attempted to press that point beyond the honour and feelings of Mr. Perceval's administration. I stated that I could not consider any administration to be constituted on a foundation of justice towards individual talents and services, or towards the interests of the country, in which Mr. Canning should not hold a high, efficient station. But I added that Mr. Canning was under no engagement to me which could preclude his acceptance of any office which might be offered to him; that, on the other hand, Mr. Canning would certainly make the same declaration with regard to my perfect freedom.

Lord Liverpool said that he had pursued this course of communication, being convinced that, under the present circumstances, I would not accept office unless a fair proposal was made to Mr. Canning. I declared to Lord Liverpool that he was correct in this view of my sentiments towards Mr. Canning, repeating, however, that Mr. Canning and I were perfectly free to act as each might think fit, and that our agreement in

many great public principles could not affect questions of mere official arrangement.

8thly. I expressed my wish to receive this communication in writing, to answer it in writing, and also to submit my sentiments upon the whole transaction in an audience of the Prince Regent.

Lord Liverpool informed me that Mr. Canning would transmit to me a copy of the Minute[1] of Lord Liverpool's conversation taken in his presence, and Lord Liverpool desired me to consider that paper as the written communication which I wished to receive. I agreed to Lord Liverpool's proposal on this point. I then informed Lord Liverpool that I would return my answer in writing to that paper; whatever might be the tenor of my answer, with regard to the great public considerations on which it must be founded, I expressed my hope that Lord Liverpool would be assured of my sincere personal respect and esteem.

I now transmit this Minute to Lord Liverpool, requesting him to insert any correction which he may think requisite.

(*Signed*) WELLESLEY.

May 18, 1812.

Corrected by Lord Liverpool, and returned to him.—WELLESLEY.[2]

Neither Wellesley nor Canning joined the Ministry. Wellesley would not come in unless the war was carried on more vigorously, and unless a measure of Catholic Emancipation was

[1] *See* Canning's Minute.

[2] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 344.

introduced. Behind these reasons was his idea that he ought to be Prime Minister. Canning likewise insisted upon the claims of the Catholics, but, although he asserted that he was not actuated by personal feelings, there is no doubt that he was far from desirous of being a colleague of Castlereagh. Lord Liverpool approached Wellesley's brother, William Wellesley-Pole, then Chief Secretary for Ireland. He was strongly opposed to Catholic Emancipation.

THE HON. WILLIAM WELLESLEY-POLE *to* THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL

May, 1812

Before I spoke to you this morning I had unalterably formed my decision respecting my resignation, but as you seemed so anxious that I should not announce it till to-morrow, I determined not to press the point. I am, however, very desirous that you should know, before the House meets to-day, that no circumstance can alter my determination, lest it should be supposed that the result of the division could have any influence upon me.

The very flattering manner in which you were so kind as to propose to me to accept of the seals for the War Department has, I can assure you, made a very deep impression upon my mind; and I have felt the greatest regret that the circumstances under which I so very peculiarly stand rendered it impossible for me to accept the office, without subjecting myself to difficulties and incon-

veniences which I am bound by every principle of affection to my brother to avoid. Under the circumstances in which he now stands with the present Cabinet, I felt that I could not undertake a prominent part in your administration without appearing to enter into positive hostility to him, which would probably end in an open and eternal breach between us, and possibly to one between me and other members of my family; and this without, in my own judgment, being able, by accepting the seals, to render you such assistance as to make the arrangement of any very great and essential importance to you.

It being thus, as I conceive, impossible for me to accede to your wishes and become Secretary of State for the War Department, I feel that, declining to step forward into the front of the battle in this time of danger, I cannot, with any degree of regard for my own honour, consent to remain in my present situation, and thus retain a subordinate office under an administration in which I had refused one of the highest rank and importance. This would be meanly clinging to office with loss of character.

I have already explained to you that I think the Catholic question practically so changed by the unfortunate death of Mr. Perceval, that no administration should do less than give it consideration, and endeavour to frame some proposal to be made to the Catholics. Excepting in this instance, I am not aware of any difference between us upon the great outline of politics. Upon the proposals made to Lord Wellesley and Mr.

Canning, I need not say more than I have already expressed to you. It would have given me the most sincere pleasure to have seen an administration formed to which they had been parties. I have only now to add that I have not had any communication either directly or indirectly with Lord Wellesley since Mr. Perceval's death, and I shall not inform him of the decision to which I have come till to-morrow.

I shall be obliged to you if you will appoint a time for me to wait upon you respecting the arrangements consequent upon my resignation. There are some points respecting Irish affairs which I shall have to lay before you.

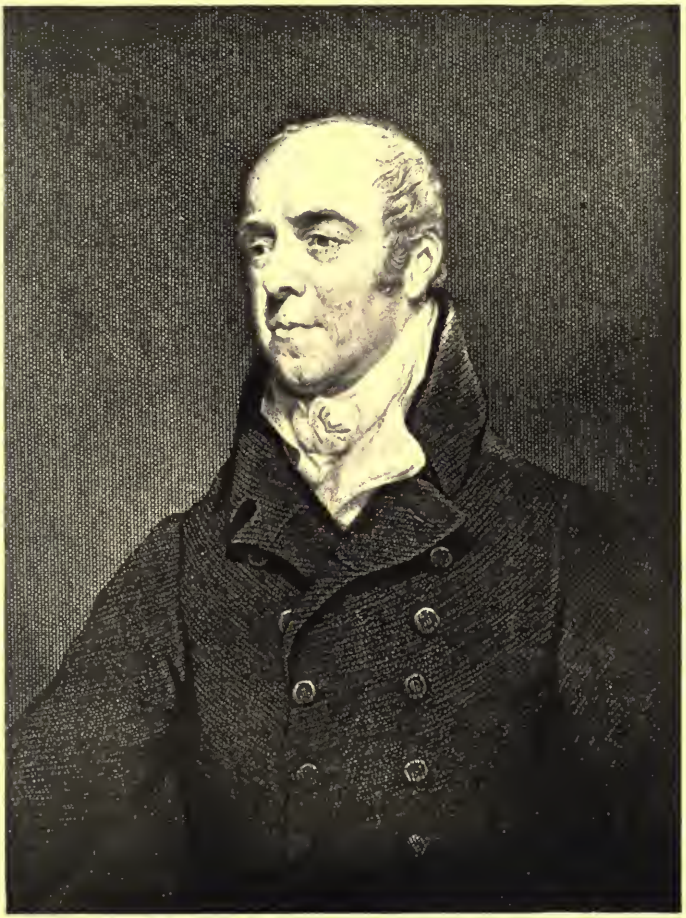
I beg you, my dear Lord, to believe that I shall ever retain a just sense of your great kindness towards me, and that I shall reflect with pride upon your good opinion.[1]

Liverpool was willing to carry on the Government without outside aid, but Stuart-Wortley[2] moved in the House of Commons an address to the Prince Regent, "praying him, under the present circumstances of the country, to form a strong and efficient administration." This was carried by a majority of four, and the Ministry tendered their resignation.

The Prince Regent, on May 22, asked Wellesley to discover if it would be possible to organise an administration in which the Liverpool party and

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 398.

[2] James Archibald Stuart-Wortley (1776-1845), created Baron Wharncliffe, 1821.



J. Jackson, R.A., pinxt. *T. A. Dean, sculpt.*

WILLIAM WYNDHAM, LORD GRENVILLE

the Grey and Grenville section would coalesce. "The intriguing is going on briskly," Brougham wrote to Creevey. "Wellesley has seen [the] P[rince Regent], and then Wellesley saw Grey. Grey says all is afloat and nothing settled, but that all will be settled before Monday. This shows a *nibble* at least, and I lament it much. To be in the same boat with Wellesley and Canning is pretty severe. I see no chance of their making such a thing as one *can* support; indeed I feel in opposition to them already, should they agree about it."[1] Canning was willing to join, but Grey and Grenville, though in favour of Catholic Emancipation, were not in accord with Wellesley as to the necessity for conducting the war in more vigorous fashion, and would not come in. Canning undertook the negotiation with Liverpool and Melville.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE PRINCE REGENT

Apsley House: May 23, 1812

Lord Wellesley presents his humble duty to your Royal Highness, and has the honour to state that he has employed every practicable degree of diligence in preparing the means of executing your Royal Highness' gracious commands, relative to the formation of a Plan of Administration for your Royal Highness' consideration; and that he hopes to be enabled to attend your Royal Highness for the purpose of submitting his

[1] *Creevey Papers*, i. 154.

respectful report on that important subject to-morrow in the afternoon.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

May 23, 1812

I have written to Lord Liverpool and to Lord Melville, to propose to call upon them, and I will come to you as soon as I have seen them.

In the meantime, I think it desirable to state in writing, for our mutual satisfaction, my understanding of the principles on which you undertake the execution of the Prince Regent's commands for the formation of an administration, and on which I am cordially disposed to act with you.

I understood these principles to be :

1st. That the whole question relating to the Roman Catholics shall be taken into early and serious consideration, with a sincere and earnest desire to bring it to a final and satisfactory settlement ;

2ndly. That the war in the Peninsula shall be prosecuted with the best means of the country.

And I understand you to be ready and desirous to comprehend in your arrangements all persons, of whatever party-connection, who are disposed to act on both these principles, the latter of them subject, of course, to such modification as the varying circumstances of this country, of the war, and of the state of Europe may require. Upon these principles I am ready to co-operate, in your administration, with any persons who may be induced to accept your proposals ; agreeing to

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 437.

lay aside such minor points of difference as may admit of postponement; endeavouring to come to a common understanding upon such of them as may be susceptible to adjustment. The state of the country appears to me to make it the duty of every man to soften, and reduce as much as possible, all grounds of unessential disagreement.

In acting upon these principles I have myself no personal objections. I hope none will be made in any quarter. But I think it right to apprise you that while I protest against any such exceptions, if unfortunately the arrangement should be in the hazard of being defeated by the pressing of any personal pretensions against objections which, after any fair efforts to surmount them, shall appear for the present moment absolutely unsurmountable, much as I shall regret that circumstance, I shall not think it consistent with my public duty, after having once embarked in the undertaking, to make the admission of pretensions merely personal (however natural I might think them), a *sine quâ non* condition of my perseverance in it.

On the other hand, should any personal objection be taken to voting with me (as I know has been done on former occasions), I earnestly beg and insist that no pretensions of mine may be suffered to stand in the way of an arrangement otherwise agreeable to His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, and calculated to afford to the country the advantage of an efficient and comprehensive administration.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37296 f. 427.

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Gloucester Lodge: May 24, 1812

I enclose the answers from Lord Liverpool and Lord Melville, which have only just reached me. I understood indeed that the meeting was not to take place till ten last night.

I need hardly assure you that this is not the sort of objection which I had in my contemplation, as likely or possible, when I wrote to you yesterday.[1]

[ENCLOSURE NO. 1]

THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL *to* GEORGE CANNING

Fife House: May 23, 1812

I have communicated to my colleagues the memorandum which I received from you this afternoon.

They do not think it necessary to enter into any discussion of the principles stated in that memorandum, because they all feel themselves bound, particularly after what has recently passed, to decline the proposal of becoming members of an administration to be formed by Lord Wellesley.[2]

[ENCLOSURE NO. 2]

VISCOUNT MELVILLE *to* GEORGE CANNING

Park Lane: May 23, 1812

You will probably have received to-night from Lord Liverpool the answer to the proposal which you left with him and communicated to me this

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 7.
[2] Add. MSS. 37396 f. 431.

afternoon. Having stated to you my strong repugnance, or rather my decided objection under present circumstances, to join an administration of which Lord Wellesley was to be the head, it might be sufficient for me to refer to Lord Liverpool's reply, more especially as I do not wish to enter into any detailed reasoning on a question relating to a matter of personal feeling. I think it due, however, to you as well as to myself, to state distinctly that I have no objection to act with an administration formed on the two principles mentioned in your memorandum, though I think it improbable that any consideration which the Government can give to the subject of the restrictions on the Roman Catholics will enable it to propose such a system as will wholly satisfy their claims, and at the same time afford that degree of security to the Protestant Establishment which is generally felt to be necessary.[1]

Liverpool and other friends of Perceval held aloof for a personal reason. "Lord Wellesley had scarcely rejected Lord Liverpool's offer, and Mr. Wortley's motion was still pending," Yonge, the biographer of Liverpool, has written, "when a document appeared in the public newspapers purporting to be the authorised statement of the grounds of Lord Wellesley's resignation in the previous February, and bearing also the appearance of a public attack on Mr. Perceval's memory, while the sorrow of his friends for his loss was still

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 9.

fresh and unalloyed." It was on this account that Liverpool wrote in reply to Canning that he and his colleagues "all felt themselves bound, particularly after what had recently passed, to decline the proposal of an administration to be formed by Lord Wellesley," and even Canning's utmost effort only obtained this reply: "I can answer for myself (and I am confident equally for my colleagues) that I am not actuated in declining the proposal made to me by any objection of a nature *purely personal;* but when I advert to the opinions and statements recently sent forth to the world respecting public men with whom I have been connected and public measures in which I have been engaged, I do not feel I should have acted consistently with my own honour and character, or the respect which I must ever, and shall ever, feel to my departed friend, if, under such circumstances, I could have consented to have entertained the proposal which you were authorised to submit to me."[1] It only transpired later that Wellesley's document had been sent to the Press by an injudicious friend.

GEORGE CANNING *to* VISCOUNT MELVILLE

Gloucester Lodge: May 24, 1812

I received your letter of last night at the same time with Lord Liverpool's. Although neither of them perhaps strictly required an answer from me, I have not been able to refrain

[1] *Life of the Earl of Liverpool*, i. 390-1.

from offering some suggestions to Lord Liverpool, which I leave to his discretion to communicate to his colleagues or not; and I cannot forbear adding to what I have already stated to him some further considerations which arise peculiarly out of your letter.

To Lord Liverpool I have suggested doubts whether any objection merely personal would constitute, at the present moment, a sufficient justification for refusing to act in an administration, the public principles of which were allowed not to form any insuperable obstacle to union; and whether, when the refusal is rested on an objection merely personal, that objection ought not, in justice both to the parties making it and to the individual concerned, to be clearly defined.

But *your* objection is so much more limited in its nature than that of your colleagues in general, while your agreement in the principles of the proposed administration is entire (or is at most qualified by a doubt as to the practical benefit which may ultimately result from one of them, not as to the expediency of trying it) that, having thus *no* public ground on which to rest your refusal, I cannot help hoping that you will reconsider it.

Your colleagues object to any administration which Lord Wellesley may form; you only to one of which he shall be the head. Now, as you have seen that paragraph in Lord Wellesley's Minute, in which he disclaims for himself all pretension to any station in the administration which he considers himself merely as the instrument of the Prince Regent's pleasure in forming,

it is unnecessary to remark to you that if he is placed at the head of it he will be placed there either by the special designation of His Royal Highness or by the acknowledged advantage of such arrangement. No presumption or exclusive claim of pre-eminence can be justly attributable to him.

Surely, in such a case, having no objection to act with him as Secretary of State, it will be difficult to explain and justify the distinction which would prevent your acting with him as First Lord of the Treasury, if such should be his destination. I hope you will forgive an appeal to your better judgment, the motives of which on my part I trust you cannot misapprehend, and which I owe it to Lord Wellesley to assure you, in the most solemn manner, is made without his consent or knowledge.[1]

Memorandum by EARL GREY *and* LORD GRENVILLE[2]

May 24, 1812

In such a moment as the present we feel it to be the duty of all public men, both by frank and conciliatory explanations of principle, and by the total abandonment of every personal object, to facilitate, as far as may be in their power, the means of giving effect to the late vote of the House of Commons, and of averting the imminent and unparalleled dangers of the country.

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 11.

[2] This is the reply to Wellesley's first tentative overture to Earl Grey and Lord Grenville.

Lord Wellesley has selected two among the many important subjects which must engage the attention of any man who could, in such circumstances, be called upon to consider the acceptance of stations of public trust. On those two points our explanation shall be as distinct as it is in our power to make it.

On the first indeed our opinion is too well known, and has been too recently expressed to need repetition. We have derived a very high gratification from Lord Wellesley's powerful exertions in support of the claims of the Roman Catholics, as well as from the manner in which that subject is adverted to in his Minute. And we do not hesitate to assure him that we will warmly support any proposal made by any ministers for the immediate consideration of those claims with a view to their conciliatory adjustment—a measure without which we have already declared that we can entertain no hope in any case of rendering our own service useful.

As to the second point, no person feels more strongly than we do the advantage which would result from a successful termination of the present contest in Spain. But we are of opinion that the direction of military operations in an extensive war, and the more or less vigorous prosecution of those operations, are questions not of principle but of policy, to be regulated by circumstances in their nature temporary and fluctuating, and in many cases known only to persons in official stations: by the engagements of the country, the prospects of ultimate success, the extent of

the exertions necessary for its attainment, and the means of supporting those efforts without too great a pressure on the finances, and internal prosperity of the country. On such questions therefore no public men, whether in or out of office, can undertake more than a deliberate and dispassionate consideration according to the circumstances of the case as it may appear, and to such means of information as may then be within their reach.

But we cannot in sincerity conceal from Lord Wellesley that in the present state of the finances we entertain the strongest doubts of the practicability of an increase in any branch of the public expenditure.[1]

THE EARL OF MOIRA *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

May 29, 1812

The Prince wishes to see your Lordship at nine this evening. I trust he will then empower you to address yourself to the Opposition. But, as I have had a sharp skirmish with His Royal Highness about Lord Grey, it will be quite necessary that I should see you previously. I will, therefore, come to Apsley House from the *Levée*, probably about four o'clock. It would have been my wish to attend you directly, only that it was privately hinted to me the Prince was anxious I should be at Carlton House before the *Levée* began, in order that by going into the room with the Ministers I might contradict a report

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 1.

current of his having struck me and Lord Erskine out of the list for the *entrées*.[1]

THE EARL OF MOIRA *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Confidential *June* 1, 1812

I return to you the two papers which you have had the kindness to send for my perusal.[2]

It gives me sincere regret to infer from Lord Grey's observation (coupling it with the tenor of publications in the newspapers by that party) that there has been a pre-determined resolution to resist the overture which they expected. This cannot have resulted from any difference with respect to principles, for they have stated none. The motive must be a calculation that an administration fashioned on a plan which shall receive that party only as sharers in power and station would not afford sufficient scope for the gratification of adherents. God forbid that I should in this impute to any of the truly dignified characters who take a lead in the Opposition a view consciously unworthy. My apprehension is, that the fear of appearing to sacrifice the interests of the friends who have been supporting them misleads their judgment as to the claim of their sovereign and their country on their duties. A party with a disposition which manifests itself so decidedly at the outset of negotiation is hopeless. You should, therefore, prepare yourself without delay to form an administration free from recourse to that party further than the profession that any

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 57.

[2] Wellesley's Minute and the reply of Grey and Grenville.

individual who may not subscribe to the unmeasured pretensions of their leaders will meet the fairest consideration. When I say this I mean, of course, that as to any public step you should wait for the formal answer of Lords Grey and Grenville jointly. To the last we should acknowledge, however feeble the claim may be, that they may adopt a more temperate determination than is now held forth. I only take the liberty of advising that you should lose no time in fashioning in your mind the outline of an arrangement squared to this expected refusal.[1]

So far Wellesley had been asked merely to see if it was possible to bring about a combination of the two great parties, but now that this was shown to be impossible the Prince Regent, on June 1, authorised Wellesley to form an administration. He did not regard the reply of Grey and Grenville as final, or as closing the door to further negotiation, and accordingly made a more formal proposal to them. He informed them that the projected administration included himself, as first Lord of the Treasury, Lord Moira, Lord Erskine, and Canning. He proceeded to make them a definite offer of either four or five places in the Cabinet, according as the Cabinet should consist of twelve or of thirteen members; the filling of these places was to be left entirely to them.

This offer they were unable to accept.

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 81.

Earl Grey and Lord Grenville *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Camelford House: June 3, 1812

We have considered with the most serious attention the Minute which we have had the honour to receive from your Lordship, and we have communicated it to such of our friends as we have had the opportunity of consulting.

On the occasion of a proposal made to us under the authority of His Royal Highness the Prince Regent, we wish to renew in the most solemn manner the declaration of our unfeigned desire to have facilitated, as far as was in our power, the means of giving effect to the late vote of the House of Commons, and of averting the imminent and unparalleled dangers of the country. No sense of the public distress and difficulty, no personal feelings of whatever description, would have prevented us under such circumstances from accepting with dutiful submission any situation in which we could have hoped to serve His Royal Highness usefully and honourably.

But it appears to us, on the most dispassionate reflection, that the proposal stated to us by your Lordship cannot justify any such expectation.

We are invited, not to discuss with your Lordship, or with any other public men according to the usual practice in such cases, the various and important considerations both of measures and of arrangements which belong to the formation of a new Government in all its branches; but to recommend to His Royal Highness a number,

limited by previous stipulation, of persons willing to be included in a Cabinet of which the outlines are already definitely arranged.

To this proposal we could not accede without the sacrifice of the very object which the House of Commons has recommended, the formation of a strong and efficient Government. We enter not into the examination of the relative proportions, or of the particular arrangements which it has been judged necessary thus previously to establish. It is to the principle of disunion and jealousy that we object, to the supposed balance of contending interests in a Cabinet so measured out by preliminary stipulation. The times imperiously require an administration united in principle and strong in mutual reliance, possessing also the confidence of the Crown, and assured of its support in those healing measures which the public safety requires, and which are necessary to secure to the Government the opinion and affections of the people.

No such hope is presented to us by this project, which appears to us equally new in practice and objectionable in principle. It tends, as we think, to establish within the Cabinet itself a system of counteraction inconsistent with the prosecution of any uniform and beneficial course of policy.

We must, therefore, request permission to decline all participation in a Government constituted upon such principles, satisfied as we are that the certain loss of character which must arise from it to ourselves could be productive

only of disunion and weakness in the administration of the public interests.[1]

After the receipt of this letter, Wellesley informed His Royal Highness that it was impossible for him to form a Ministry, and he asked permission to announce to Parliament the result of his efforts.

THE EARL OF MOIRA *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

June 3, 1812

The Prince commands me to say that he has no objection to your stating in the House of Lords the circumstances attending the late negotiations in their fullest extent. I must, however, still hope that there may be no necessity for your taking this step to-day.[2]

The Regent once more turned to the Whigs, and an attempt was now made by Lord Moira to form a Ministry, of which Lord Wellesley was invited to become a member. Moira, however, was no whit more successful than Wellesley, largely because of obstacles raised by Grenville and Grey. From the first there was little hope that he would succeed where others had so signally failed.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE EARL OF MOIRA

Apsley House: June 4, 1812

I was unwilling this morning to state as strongly

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 90.
[2] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 96.

as I feel it the impossibility of my having any participation in the plan of an administration which now appears to be in contemplation. But it is due to your Lordship's high character, and to your powerful claims on my respect and gratitude, not to delay a direct and final statement of my determination on a point of such pressing exigency. I have therefore requested Mr. Pole to deliver this note to you, and to explain the reasons which induce me to hope that your Lordship will receive with your habitual kindness and indulgence a resolution which is indispensably necessary to my honour and happiness.[1]

LORD BORINGDON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Portman Square: June 5, 1812

I heard yesterday from two or three different quarters that when your Lordship used the words, "dreadful animosities" in the House of Lords on Wednesday[2] you intended to apply them to the Prince Regent's sentiments towards Lord Grey.

In the House of Lords this day Lord Moira referred to this interpretation. Lord Douglas hoped the day would come when your Lordship should give to the House an account of the transactions in which you have been recently engaged, and expressed the opinion that your Lordship and Mr. Canning could never have entertained a hope of any success in the proposition

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 113.

[2] The expression in Wellesley's speech on the causes of his failure to form a Ministry.

to Lords Grey and Grenville, as a difference of opinion upon every subject was known to be entertained between you. The Duke of Athol stated in strong terms his regret and astonishment at statements of "dreadful animosities" in the present situation of the country.

Under the circumstances, I stated to the House that though I had not had the slightest authority from, or indeed communication with, your Lordship upon the matter of this expression, yet from my general knowledge of your character and sentiments I could take upon myself positively to assert that the idea of applying the expression to the Prince Regent had never entered into your contemplation, and that I considered your Lordship as utterly incapable of holding, even by inference, such language in Parliament; that I was persuaded that the exact words had been uttered in the hurry of the pending discussion, and without any intention of applying them in their strongest sense to any individual whatever—though it certainly might have come within the hearing of some persons that strong personal sentiments had been expressed in certain quarters (referring to Lord Liverpool, etc.) against your Lordship; that I was confident you would hail the day on which the discussion prayed for by Lord Douglas might with propriety take place; that so far from a disunion between your Lordship and Mr. Canning, and Lords Grey and Grenville upon all subjects, it was known that upon the great domestic question now pressing upon the general consideration there was an entire

conformity of sentiment; and that my own opinion was that your Lordship's negotiation with Lords Grey and Grenville, so far from having been felt to be hopeless, might rather date its failure to your Lordship's mind having been too free from doubt as to the probability of failure.

Having in the outset of what I addressed to the House disclaimed any authority from your Lordship, what I said might be considered as immaterial. I have, nevertheless, thought it right to communicate it to your Lordship, requesting you to give me credit as well for the motives by which I was actuated, as for the respect and regard with which I remain . . .[1]

Wellesley subsequently explained that he had deliberately used the phrase "dreadful personal animosities," and that he had used it with reference to the attitude assumed towards him throughout the negotiations of Liverpool and his colleagues. Ultimately Wellesley published the *Correspondence and Documents explaining the Proceedings on the Recent Negotiations for the Foundation of an Administration.*

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 119.

BOOK VII

IN OPPOSITION. 1812-1820

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IN OPPOSITION. 1812-1820

Liverpool's ministry : Wellesley and Canning : Canning elected for Liverpool : Marriage of Wellesley's daughter : The relations of Wellesley and Canning : Canning disposes of a rumour : His advice to Wellesley : Wellington in Spain : Vittoria : The invasion of France : Napoleon's last efforts : His abdication : The treaty of Fontainebleau : Wellesley's change of view : Restrictions on the importation of corn : Wellesley and the Grenville party strongly protest : Poverty in the country : Agrarian disturbances : Coercive measures of the Government : The opposition of Wellesley and the Grenville party.

THE Prince Regent now sent for Liverpool, and he formed a Government which was generally looked upon as a stop-gap Ministry, but which in fact endured for fifteen years. Sidmouth went to the Home Office, Castlereagh to the Foreign Office, and Bathurst to the War Office. Vansittart became Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Eldon Lord Chancellor. Wellesley was terribly upset by his failure to form a Ministry, for it was the ambition of his life to be Prime Minister. He did not, however, skulk in his tent, but continued to interest himself in the political affairs of the day during the following eight years. He and Canning acted in concert while out of office, and were recognised allies, and, when apart, regular correspondents.

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Eastham*
August 25, 1812

I see the truth is transpiring—as to Lord Wellington's situation in Spain.[1]

I hear, in various ways, what is, I hope, not the truth about him—*viz.*, that he is (or is required or believed by the Government to be) indifferent, if not adverse, to your politics and Pole's.

It would be of great importance, I should think, to clear this up: to the public if the Government are deceiving them; to the Government themselves and the Regent if they are deceived.

Could Pole employ his summer better than in a little trip to headquarters? It would not take above two months. He would be back, therefore, before the dissolution, which (if it takes place at all, and I doubt it) cannot take place before the middle or end of October.[2]

I am wandering about till that time, into Hampshire, Dorsetshire, and Devonshire.

My ultimate point is Talham, where I shall be from about the middle of September till the first or second week in October. By the end of October I shall be returned to Gloucester Lodge, and settled there for the session, which (whether then by dissolution or not) may *possibly*, I think, take place before Christmas.

[1] On August 12 Wellington entered Madrid as a result of his victory over Marmont at Salamanca (July 22nd), but he was forced to retire with some precipitation into Portugal on account of the approach of two French armies from the south-east and north under Soult and Souham.

[2] Parliament was dissolved on September 29.

In this locomotive state I cannot give you any very accurate address by which to write to me on the road, but a letter sent to Gloucester Lodge will always be carefully forwarded to me on the day of its arrival there.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Liverpool: October 17, 1812

My contest ended yesterday,[2] leaving me at the head of the poll with a majority of 500 over my competitor Brougham, and of almost 100 (99, I believe) over my colleague, the old member, General Gascoigne. The numbers are:

Canning	1,631
Gascoigne	1,532
Brougham	1,131
Creevey	1,068

There has not been such a struggle here for fifty years, and the loyal party, having gained this decisive victory, assure me that I may reckon upon being member for Liverpool as long as I please to represent them.

It has not cost me *a farthing*, and my reception has been such as to be really intoxicating. I am this moment returned from a triumphal chairing round the town, and have not steadiness of hands or head to do more than send you this general report of myself.

I received yesterday your letter of the 14th.

[1] Add. MSS. 57297 f. 174.

[2] The general election took place in October, and the new House of Commons assembled on November 24. It was not dissolved until June 10, 1818.

I rejoice in your success.

I shall probably want the seat for one of my own immediate friends, as these are thrown out. Do you know of another marketable? I stay here ten days for a public dinner which they wish to give me before I go. The interval is to be filled up with a round of private dinners with my principal supporters—*not one* of whom I knew before I came here.[1]

At this time Wellesley's attention was engaged by a family matter, no less important than the engagement of his natural daughter, Hyacinthe Mary, to Edward Littleton.[2] In her letter Hyacinthe shows undoubted shrewdness, and conveys the impression that to her marriage was as much a matter of settlements as sentiment.

Edward John Littleton *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Brighton: November 1, 1812

Not having the honour of a personal acquaintance with your Lordship, I am under the necessity

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 179.

[2] Edward John Littleton (1791-1863), member of Parliament for Staffordshire from 1812 to 1832, and then for South Staffordshire. He was a stalwart supporter of Catholic Emancipation. In 1832 he was proposed by Hume and O'Connell for the Speakership, but Manners-Sutton was re-elected by a large majority. In the following year, when Wellesley became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, he accepted the office of Chief Secretary. Two years later he was created Baron Hatherton of Hatherton. He married Mary Hyacinthe, Wellesley's natural daughter, on December 12, 1812, and by her had one son, who succeeded as second Baron Hatherton, and three daughters. His wife died on January 4, 1849.

of addressing myself to you by letter, the object of which is to request the honour of an alliance with your family by a union with Miss Wellesley. I am happy to say I have been fortunate enough to receive her acceptance and the good wishes of Lady Wellesley and her son, subject, however, to your Lordship's approbation.

It is perhaps necessary to inform your Lordship that I have lately inherited the fortune of my uncle, Sir Edward Littleton, and together with it have succeeded to the representation of the county in which he resided. The annual income of the estate, which is entailed upon my children, will be, when raised, at least £18,000.

I attained the age of legal maturity in last March, but, by an instruction conveyed in my uncle's will, am prevented from entering on the property till I reach the age of twenty-four years, till which period I am allowed a rent charge of £1,500 a year. But as the estate is perfectly unencumbered I should not hesitate to borrow any additional sum which may be requisite during my minority. As Miss Wellesley and her brother have kindly promised to write on the subject to your Lordship, I trust their letters will render it superfluous to say anything more of myself. I shall be in town at the latter end of the week or the beginning of the next, when I hope your Lordship will allow me the honour of paying my respects to you in person.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37315 f. 147.

Mary Hyacinthe Wellesley *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Brighton: November 4 [1812]

My dearest Papa,

I cannot express to you the pleasure and satisfaction I derived from the perusal of your affectionate and flattering letters, both to me and to Mr. Littleton, and I hope I shall be able in person to return you my warmest thanks the beginning of next week, when we shall return to town and immediately begin the necessary preparations and arrangements for the marriage, which Mr. Littleton is desirous should take place as soon as possible. I am very anxious that your lawyers should be employed in arranging the business of my marriage settlements, as those of my sister[1] were so well managed by them; and I trust you will have the kindness to take the trouble to direct them in everything, as you did on that occasion. You will probably remember that her jointure was £2,000 a year, and her pin money £500, which was thought well proportioned to Sir William's income of £4,000 or £5,000 a year; but do not you think the same jointure would be much too small in proportion to Mr. Littleton's large fortune? However, I have no doubt but you will be the best judge of what is necessary to be done, and I am fully persuaded you will lose no opportunity of settling everything in the most advantageous manner. I have every reason to be pleased with Mr. Littleton's kind and generous disposi-

[1] Anne Wellesley. *See* vol. i. p. 41.

tion, and he seems well disposed to meet all my wishes with the utmost liberality. With regard to his own habits and inclinations, they are such as will secure us against the effects of any extravagance. You will find his principles and character most correct, without the least taint of pedantry or affectation; indeed, every day adds to the conviction I feel that my choice cannot fail of meeting your approbation.

Mr. Littleton will return to town about the same time as ourselves, and tells me he will seize the first opportunity of paying his respects to you.

I am very much concerned to hear your eyes are bad, though I hope by this time they are perfectly recovered.

Believe me, dearest Papa,
Your sincerely affectionate daughter,
M. HYACINTHE WELLESLEY.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Sunning Hill: November 19, 1812

You have a long-tailed partizan in *The Times* called "Vetus," who, amidst a great deal of reasoning and eloquence of the very highest sort, introduces a strain of flattery to you and disparagement to every other human being, such as makes the friends of every other human being look about them and exclaim: "What can all this mean?" *I* do not attribute to you being party or privy to these letters, but the world does. And, coupling that disclaimer of *your following me*, which you thought it necessary to publish

[1] Add. MSS. 37315 f. 151.

in your correspondence with Lord Liverpool last spring, with the exhortations to all mankind, and to me particularly, to follow *you* and you only, with which "Vetus" has more than once indoctrinated the world, a presumption was fast growing up (as I was informed) in the minds of many persons in and out of Parliament, which neither you could wish to encourage, nor I for a moment endure, that I had recently taken some new oath of allegiance and fidelity—a presumption which I thought it necessary at once and absolutely to destroy.

I thought this the more necessary because I received, while at Liverpool, inquiries from some of my friends whether there had not recently passed between us (you and me) something of a more binding and solemn compact than had subsisted before, identifying our interests, and arranging our pretensions. To these enquiries I have answered, and continue to answer, that nothing of the sort has passed; that we stand towards each other exactly as we did last spring; and I refer to your clear statement in your letter to Lord Liverpool as exactly defining our relative situation. This is the whole meaning and the whole extent of what I have said, written, or spoken upon this subject. I should have been much better pleased that it had not been necessary to say anything upon it of any kind, but that necessity was not of my causing, nor, I dare say, of yours.

To come now to a more important matter.

The state of things in Spain does indeed afford

you matter of just but melancholy triumph ; and I think it can hardly be expected of you that you should refrain from explaining yourself fully on this subject on the first day of the session. I think it will be highly advantageous for you to do so—but (I still think) to do so, not as a determined opponent, but as a retired statesman taking a distrait, commanding, and unimpaired view of the state of the country.

I know that the stand on the Isthmus between the two parties is very difficult to maintain. I have kept my balance there for near three years, and can therefore speak to it with some experience ; but I am equally convinced that it ought to be maintained at whatever cost or exertion, and that in retreating from the Ministry to fall over into the Opposition would be to lose entirely the vantage ground which we occupy in public opinion, and to identify ourselves with a lost cause.

To change my metaphor : our object, I apprehend (an object, I mean, of course, subordinate and only legitimate as being instrumental to our view of what is best for the country) is to force the present Ministry to a capitulation—*not* to put the whole garrison to the sword. Not that I much care how many wounds or contusions they all, and each of them, receive in the course of the siege. I only wish that a few of them may be left alive to man the lower part of the works, if the fort should ever be put into our hands ; and I think it desirable that the terms on which their lives are spared should not be *so* absolutely

disgraceful as to make them utterly *unuseable* hereafter.

One advantage of a more mitigated line on your part will be that it will enable me to march more nearly in a parallel with you in the House of Commons on the same occasion. The tone which I *recommend* to *you I must* adopt. I can speak in no other, *yet*, than as regretting and admonishing. The difference between us in one respect, *viz.*, that *I* have not any prophecies to boast of, and *you* have, is in your favour, and will justify your going higher, and speaking louder and with less management than I can. But if you were betrayed into direct and unqualified hostility, *that* would be a difference in *kind*, not in *degree; that*, I think, for our joint interest and credit, would be much better avoided.

One thing only would change my whole view of this subject: can you speak in Lord Wellington's *name*, and on his direct and avowed authority? If you can, away with caution! If not, I think—as above explained.

I shall be in town on Saturday, and, as the best opportunity of talking things over fully, would gladly dine with you (I cannot offer to dine you) on that day or Sunday. Can you receive me either day—and which?[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential — *Gloucester Lodge*
December 12, 1812

I remember your caution about *lists*, and I

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 185.

have myself never made nor authorised any list of friends of my own, much less of yours, whom indeed I could not enumerate if I would.

But there *are* such abroad—and they do prodigious mischief.

A person, a member of Parliament, came the other day to a friend of mine, and said: "I understand my name is in a list which is made out of Mr. Canning's and Lord Wellesley's friends. I beg to say that I have no pretensions to be enrolled among them," or words to that effect. Of this person I should have been pretty confident, but the list frightened him away.

This morning I have received a letter from the country with the following paragraph:

"——(I will mention the name when we meet, but do not like to write it) has just been here. He saw a list on Wednesday in the hands of—— who had just got it at Apsley House. He repeated it to me. It was, as far as I could judge, perfectly accurate, but he added that he could lay his finger on five who would be frightened away. For God's sake try if this cannot be stopped."

I thought it right that you should know this.

I have instructed the strictest enquiry on my part. Pray do the same among your friends at Apsley House, and if you can detect a list, cause it to be burned.

Not only are unconfirmed friends likely to be frightened away, but there are some who profess good inclinations *only* to raise their price with the

Government, and it would be a pity to play their game for them.[1]

Since his precipitate retirement into Portugal Wellington had been preparing for his final advance across the frontier into Spain, which took place on May 22, 1813. He concentrated his forces at Toro on the Douro and routed Joseph Buonaparte at the decisive battle of Vittoria, June 21, driving the French across the Pyrenees. San Sebastian and Pampeluna speedily fell, and he eventually crossed the Bidassoa into France.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* EARL BATHURST

Private *Canterbury: July* 3, 1813

I return you many thanks for your kind and most acceptable communication. The victory is glorious in every view, and according to the best of my judgment, solid and substantial, and full of the most important and decisive consequences. Lord Wellington's letter to me is most satisfactory. I congratulate you most cordially on this great event. I hope to be able to attend the House of Lords, and to express my opinion on the state of affairs in Spain whenever that question shall be presented for discussion. I conclude that you will soon introduce it.

Colonel Cadogan's loss is irreparable to his family and great to his country. The total loss of our army, however, bears a small proportion to the advantage of our success, which must

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 189.

operate most powerfully on every hand on our interests in the war. I would send you Lord Wellington's letter if it contained any information of which you might not be in possession; it is in every point a strong confirmation in my mind of the great importance of the victory which he has achieved.[1]

THE HON. WILLIAM WELLESLEY-POLE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Savile Row: July 12, 1813

The Regent has set about a grand *fête* in honour of Lord Wellington and the army, and he sent for me and desired I would undertake the arrangement of it with Lord Robert Seymour and others. I was, therefore, forced to set to work, though I felt it was not delicate for Lord Wellington's brother to act as a steward, and so I ventured to hint to the Duke of York, who is to preside at the *fête*. However, His Royal Highness overruled my scruples, and to-day at a meeting of some persons who have agreed to be stewards I was unanimously called upon to act. We have determined upon Vauxhall, and I think we shall have the most splendid entertainment ever given in this country. Tuesday to-morrow sennight is fixed for the celebration, and I hope you will be able to come to town and attend. We shall have all the rank, both civil and military, of the country, and it would be incomplete if you were not in your place. We meet to-morrow to settle a small subscription among the stewards, which

[1] Add. MSS. 37314 f. 8.

is necessary to defray expenses, but will not be more than twenty guineas each. I will send you an account of our proceedings when they are a little more matured. We shall not be able to advertise till to-morrow evening. The Prince asked me after you. I told him that you were gone out of town, which you thought necessary on account of your health. He said he hoped you would come up for the *fête*.

I stated to Lord Liverpool, as nearly as I could recollect, what was agreed upon by you and Canning. He heard me with great civility, and said: "All I can say at present is that what you have communicated has given me the greatest satisfaction." I have not heard from him since.[1]

By the following year the Napoleonic *régime* was apparently over. Moscow had dealt it a blow, and Leipzig had almost utterly laid it in ruins. In vain Napoleon made a last desperate effort. France had done its utmost, and was exhausted, and its Emperor had to give way before the armed hosts of half Europe, flushed with success. On March 31 the victors entered Paris. On April 6 Napoleon signed his abdication, and a treaty was signed at Fontainebleau on April 11 between Napoleon and Austria, Prussia, and Russia, wherein he renounced all claim to the sovereignty of France and Italy. He was assigned the island of Elba as an independent principality, and thither on April 28 he departed.

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 134.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Portman Square: May 18, 1814

Lord Liverpool, in answer to a question put by me, gave notice to-night in the House of Lords that he will on Monday communicate the treaty by a message from the Prince Regent and have an address upon it the following day. It becomes therefore necessary to consider what should be done upon this proceeding. I think an amendment to express our dissent from the avowed principle of the war indispensable, but upon this I am very desirous of receiving your Lordship's opinion. Lord Lansdowne is desirous, as I am also, to have some conversation with you on this subject, and we will wait on you together at any time you will appoint for that purpose. I suggested Sunday as a day on which we probably should be disengaged, and three as a convenient hour, if it should suit your Lordship.

I hope to hear that you are returned to town, quite recovered from the effects of your late indisposition.[1]

Wellesley's views concerning the war had gradually changed, and he, who had been an advocate of its being prosecuted with ever-increasing vigour, was now all in favour of peace and retrenchment. Indeed, when Napoleon returned from Elba, he was opposed to England again going to war, and was eager that the Government should accept Napoleon as the Emperor of France. His attitude on this

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 240.

matter was the beginning of the estrangement between Wellington and himself.

During the years that followed, Wellesley, though he was still interested in politics, took little active part in affairs. Though he might have made himself formidable in opposition, or invaluable as a supporter of the Government, he would do neither, and held himself aloof from the Parliamentary discussions of the day, although he had on occasion acted with the Grenville party, and had come to share their views on other subjects than the war.

There was, however, one notable exception. He took a prominent part among the opponents of restrictions on the importations of food.

Naturally enough the war with Napoleon had tended to monopolise the attention of the nation and of the Government, but its cessation made it impossible for the internal condition of the country to be ignored longer.

In 1815 a Bill had been carried by which the importation of foreign corn was prohibited so long as the price of wheat did not rise above eighty shillings per quarter; if it rose above that price it might be imported free. The object of this was to obviate the violent fluctuations in price that were caused by the sudden opening or closing of markets, according to the varying fortunes of the war.

The cessation of the war brought to an end the inflated war prices, and with the fall in price

Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., pinxt. *J. Cochran, sculpt.*

CHARLES, 2ND EARL GREY

came a shortage of work for the agricultural labourer and a reduction in wages for those who were still employed. The ranks of the unemployed were further swelled by the addition of numbers of disbanded soldiers and the introduction of machinery in place of hand labour in many manufactures. The result was the outburst of agrarian discontent and outrage.

Wellesley and the Grenville party strongly opposed the restrictions imposed on the importation of food, and when the measure was carried in spite of their opposition, drew up a memorandum on the subject, in the course of which they stated that the immediate practical effect of the law was to compel the consumer to purchase corn dearer at home than it might be imported from abroad, and to give a bounty to the grower of corn by a tax levied on the consumer.

Not only did they oppose this measure, which was very largely the cause of the discontent and disaffection in the country, but they also strongly opposed the coercive measures which the Government took for the suppression of the disturbances, especially the suspension of the Habeas Corpus Act, although later they were reconciled to their necessity.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Portman Square: June 10, 1817

Availing myself of the permission you have

so kindly given me, I hasten to communicate to your Lordship the first certain intelligence I have received of the day when the question of the renewed suspension of the Habeas Corpus is likely to be discussed.[1] Lord Liverpool told me yesterday, in the House of Lords, that the report would probably be made to-morrow, and that, allowing the necessary time for printing and delivering it, the second reading of the Bill would be appointed for Monday next. I think there is little doubt that the debate will be on that day, but should any delay take place you shall have timely notice of it.

I anxiously hope that your health will be in a state to permit your attending on this very important question, which seems to me to be now reduced to this: whether a law forming the chief protection of our liberties is to be suspended as a mere matter of course, whenever it is found convenient, in a time of distress or uneasiness, as a measure of police; and whether we shall allow a practice to be established of suspending the rights of the people of England, like the cash payments of the bank.

The pretence for this outrageous proceeding I understand to be the representations of the magistrates as to the necessity of continuing these powers for the preservation of the public peace, and a new plot, which has just been, most conveniently, discovered. The object of this was a general rising in London, Manchester, Derby,

[1] This measure was introduced as the result of many disturbances in various parts of England.

Nottingham, Sheffield, Birmingham, and Glasgow, to take place as last night, to seize arms, surprise the barracks, etc., etc.

The first communication of this tremendous plan came from Nottingham, and the proof of its existence has been obtained by the aid of a common informer, in seizing the leaders and contrivers of that part of it which was to be executed at Sheffield, in midnight council at an ale-house near that place. They consisted of about twenty-five, six of whom have been taken. They called themselves leaders of tens; their whole force, therefore, amounted to 250, and with this they were to have executed at once a measure which would have eclipsed all the achievements of the Duke of Wellington, by seizing at the same time the depôt of arms at Doncaster, surprising the barracks at Sheffield, and taking possession of Wentworth House. Two of the heroes who were to have conducted this great simultaneous operation, to be effected with arms, were parish paupers—of course the fittest persons in the world, and possessing the complete means for conducting a secret correspondence with all parts of England and Scotland.

My Lord, my Lord!

He made the giants first, and then he killed them . . . Tom Thumb . . .[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 255.

BOOK VIII

LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND

1821-1827

BOOK VIII

LORD-LIEUTENANT OF IRELAND
1821-1827

A reconciliation is effected between Liverpool and Wellesley : Wellesley is offered, and accepts, the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland : Henry Goulburn : The unsettled state of Ireland : The "Whiteboys" : The Catholic question : Wellesley's love of work : His energy : Wellesley marries again : Lord Liverpool resigns : Canning becomes Prime Minister : Canning suggests that Wellesley should again go to India : Lord Melbourne : Plunket : The rupture between Canning and Wellington : Correspondence concerning it : Herries : Canning offers Wellesley the Embassy to Vienna : Projected changes in the Government of Ireland : Lord Anglesey to be Wellesley's successor : The death of Canning : The result of Wellesley's seven years' administration of Ireland.

GRADUALLY the enmity and bad feeling that had existed between the Government and Wellesley had died out with the passing of the years. A *rapprochement* seemed likely when Wellesley supported the Ministry in the legislation designed to deal with the home troubles of 1819, and in December 1821, on the retirement of Earl Talbot, Liverpool offered him the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland. This position, though without a seat in the Cabinet, Wellesley accepted.

THE MARQUESS OF BUCKINGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Confidential and secret *London*
December 3, 1821

On Friday night Lord Liverpool in strict confidence rejoiced me exceedingly by informing me of your appointment. I did not write to you, because Lord Liverpool told me I was to appear to be ignorant of it. You are aware that Ministers have made overtures to me and to my friends which are now in discussion. I speak to you upon this subject with the greatest frankness. As far as personal feelings are concerned nothing can be more satisfactory to us than the offers which have been made. Our only doubt is how far the changes which are to be made will constitute a Government sufficiently strong to join consistently with our known and pledged feelings on the Catholic question. I find Lord Grenville strongly impressed, as I need not say that I am, with the advantage which your appointment holds out to Ireland, and the facilities which it gives us to act with the Government of which you there form a part. This feeling is very much strengthened by the circumstance of Mr. Plunket[1] taking office, and giving Parliamentary assistance to the Government. I will fairly tell you, however, that in Lord Grenville's mind I find this impression considerably neutralised by the appoint-

[1] William Conyngham Plunket (1764-1854), a strong supporter of Catholic Emancipation, was appointed Attorney-General of Ireland, January 1822.

ment of Mr. Goulburn[1] to be your secretary. He feels that Mr. Goulburn's known and eager opposition to the Catholic question will, added to Mr. Peel's holding the Home seals, have the effect in Ireland of undoing the good resulting from the impression produced by your appointment; and he fears that your administration will be fettered by a hostile secretary and an equally hostile Secretary of State. I am free to confess to you, in strict confidence, that my feelings are not so much alive to this danger as are Lord Grenville's. I lament Mr. Goulburn's appointment as one calculated certainly to excite those feelings in other minds besides Lord Grenville's, and it would be decisive upon my disposition to join the Government did I not place entire reliance [upon your] firmness and decision, and upon [your] being the most unlikely man to allow yourself to be fettered . . .

You have it in your contemplation to go to Dropmore . . . It would be very material if your arrangements would permit of your going to Dropmore *to-morrow* early, in order that Lord Grenville may not come to his decision before he sees your Lordship. I know the respect which he bears to you and the sincere regard he

[1] Henry Goulburn (1784-1856), had entered Parliament in 1808, and had held the Under-Secretaryships of the Home Office and the War Office. He was in 1821 appointed Chief Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, which post he held until 1827. Subsequently he was Home Secretary under Peel, 1834-1835, and Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1841-1846.

entertains towards you. Much, I think, will depend upon your interview.[1]

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY[2] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *December* 4, 1821

I hope you will excuse the liberty I presume to take in offering to your Lordship my cordial congratulations on your nomination to the government of Ireland. The administration of the affairs of this most important branch of the Empire must be regarded, especially at the present moment, as an undertaking well worthy of your Lordship's talents and great experience; and I cannot but feel equally sanguine and anxious that the result may entirely correspond with the zeal and ability with which this great work on your Lordship's hands will undoubtedly be undertaken.

As there are many circumstances connected with the present state and condition of Ireland on which, at a leisure moment, I shall be anxious to confer with your Lordship, and especially with respect to the course best calculated to reconcile the embarrassments which a difference of sentiment on the great question (upon which your Lordship's sentiments and mine, I believe, are nearly coincident) necessarily introduces into the administration of affairs on both sides of the water, with the efficient and tranquil march of your Lordship's immediate government: with this

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 189.

[2] Robert Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh (1769-1822), succeeded in 1821 as (second) Marquess of Londonderry.

view, I take the liberty to propose, should either Saturday in the present or Tuesday in the next week be acceptable to your Lordship, to meet you in London. Subject to any change of time or place more convenient to your Lordship, I venture to name one o'clock at the Foreign Office for an interview.[1]

If Wellesley had gone to the Foreign Office when the state of affairs was difficult, he accepted the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland when that country was in a most unsettled condition. Wellesley's first duty was to suppress the ruffians who called themselves "Whiteboys," but that, though not easy, was simplicity itself as compared with the task of endeavouring to reconcile the different parties. The feeling in Ireland towards Wellesley was kindly. He was a distinguished man, who had occupied great positions, and this placated the anti-Catholics; while the Roman Catholics were naturally delighted to have so staunch a supporter of their claims. At his first *levée* on January 8, 1822, there was, says Pearce, "a scene that was entirely new in Ireland. Men of all parties were present; the aristocracy and the merchants; the bishops and clergy of the Established Church, and the Roman Catholic hierarchy; Mr. O'Connell as well as the heads of the Orange party." A few days later, "As far as appearances testify," the *Examiner* remarked, "the

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 195.

Marquess Wellesley has commenced his Vice-royalty both auspiciously and characteristically; that is to say, with benignant countenance to all parties, and with the assumption of splendid vigour." This was an admirable beginning, but Wellesley's difficulty was to hold the balance between the Catholics and anti-Catholics. The Cabinet, however, was so made up as to secure neutrality on the principal question that at the moment agitated the country. The Lord Chancellor, Lord Manners, the Commander of the Forces, Sir David Baird, and the Chief Secretary, Goulburn, were anti-Catholics; the Vice-Treasurer, Sir G. Fitzgerald Hill, the Attorney-General, Plunket, and the Solicitor-General, Charles Kendal Bushe, were in favour of Catholic Emancipation. But Wellesley's troubles soon began. The Orange party in Dublin announced its intention to decorate the statue of William III. on July 12, the anniversary of the battle of Aughrim. This, in the interests of the people, the Lord Mayor forbade, and Wellesley supported him. This was remembered against the Lord-Lieutenant, and when in the following September he went in state to the Theatre Royal, he was received with mingled cheers, groans, and hisses, while, when "God save the King" was played, bottles and other missiles were hurled at the royal box.

Wellesley was happy at finding himself again in harness. He loved the trappings of office, it

is true, but he loved the work also. As Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland he was as indefatigable as he had been as Governor-General of India and as Foreign Minister. Whatever task was assigned him, he did it with all his might and main. He was considerate of his subordinates, but he demanded from them at least an outside show of respect. "The public functionaries in Ireland are coming to close quarters," Creevey wrote to Miss Ord, February 14, 1823. "Wellesley has dismissed at a moment's warning Sir Charles Vernon, the Chamberlain, and two others—men who had held their situation about the court for years. Their offence was dining at a Beefsteak Club last week, where Lord Chancellor Manners was likewise, and drinking as a toast, 'Success to the export trade of Ireland, and may Lord Wellesley be the first article exported.'"[1] Wellesley's energy extorted admiration from all. "The King expressed great satisfaction at Lord Wellesley's conduct in Ireland," Croker noted. "He told us that Lord Wellesley on accepting the office had made a kind of apology for his former secession and expressed his gratitude to the King for admitting him into favour and his devotion to his service; 'in short,' said the King, 'I could not help exclaiming to him, "Richard's himself again."'"[2]

[1] *Creevey Papers*, ii. 63.
[2] Croker: *Diary*, January 11, 1822.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL

Private and confidential *Phoenix Park*
November 22, 1824

I was most happy to hear so good an account of your recovery and confirmed health from Canning. Most sincerely do I hope that you may continue in strength and spirits to meet the fatigues of your arduous duty. In this hope I am cordially joined by all that is respectable of every party in this country, and by none more zealously and faithfully than by Mr. Plunket. I know no evil of such portentous aspect to the Empire, and especially to this country, as any event which should deprive us of your public services. For myself, my unfeigned anxiety on this point is greatly increased by my personal confidence in your invariable kindness towards me, and by a warm sense of gratitude for the honourable support which I have received from you since my arrival in Ireland.

You will perceive by my official communications, which will reach you in a few days, that the condition of Ireland is greatly improved within the last year. Tranquillity is generally, if not universally, restored. The causes of its restoration are such as promise permanently beneficial consequences. Every measure, Insurrection Act, Police, Tithe Bill, Revision of Magistracy, Petty Sessions, Better Administration of Law, has succeeded beyond my most sanguine hopes. The general prosperity of the Empire begins to reach Ireland. Prices have improved, rents and even tithes are

better paid, and in the districts which had been most disturbed the people are turning their attention to pursuits of industry and honest labour, instead of plotting and executing schemes of outrage and violence. The Insurrection Act has been very generally removed, and it is a very satisfactory circumstance that not one district from which it has been removed has since been disturbed. In some districts the farmers patrol with the police and military when occasion requires. In short, I should have been able, at the opening of Parliament, to present the gratifying tribute of "*Ireland tranquillised*" to His Majesty, were not the general prosperity and happiness disturbed by the noisy fury of the Catholic Association, by its contentions with the Orange Association, and by the polemical clamour of conflicting religious zealots. These new descriptions of outrages "thunder in the index," but have not revived positive violence, nor do I entertain any alarm of immediate acts of force. But it is very painful to endure such an interruption of the harvest of all our labours at a moment when prosperity is advancing with so rapid and yet steady a course. The causes, however, of good are now so securely and generally established that I look without fear to the ultimate results of the system which I have pursued under the direction of your administration.

I shall submit to you and the Cabinet my view of the condition of Ireland with relation to the Catholic Association, as well as to other political associations, the existence of which is alleged as

the proximate cause and justification of the institution of the Catholic Association. The state of the laws affecting this matter is now under consideration here; and you will be enabled, before the meeting of Parliament, to exercise your judgment on the expediency of providing any further regulations of law applicable to the peculiar circumstances and more extended operation of these associations.[1]

THE EARL OF LIVERPOOL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Walmer Castle*
October 15, 1825

I have received your letter, in which you are so kind as to communicate to me the intelligence of your intended marriage, and I beg you will be assured that I most anxiously hope it will contribute to the happiness and comfort of your life.

I have the pleasure of being personally acquainted with the lady, and I may even add of some sort of connection with her, her sister having married my lamented and excellent relation and friend, Sir Felton Hervey. May I request of you therefore to offer her my kindest regards?

Wellesley, who had been a widower for nine years,[2] married on October 29, 1825, Mary Anne,

[1] Yonge: *Lord Liverpool*, iii. 312.

[2] In November 1816 his first wife died. They had separated soon after his return from India. She went to live with her son-in-law, Edward Littleton, and was buried at Penbridge, in Staffordshire.

MARY ANNE, MARCHIONESS WELLESLEY
From a miniature by Andrew Robertson at Apsley House
By permission of his Grace the Duke of Wellington, K.G.

the widow of Robert Patterson,[1] a Baltimore merchant, and a daughter of Richard Caton, also of Baltimore. She was a grand-daughter of Charles Carroll, of Carollstown, Maryland, who, when he died in 1832, was the last surviving signatory of the Declaration of American Independence. The ceremony was performed at Dublin, first by the Lord Primate of Ireland, and afterwards, because the bride was a Roman Catholic, by the Most Rev. Dr. Murray, the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Dublin. The marriage was childless, but according to all accounts happy. The Marchioness was a Lady of the Bedchamber to Queen Adelaide. She outlived her husband by many years, dying at Hampton Court Palace on December 17, 1853. Her sisters married the Duke of Leeds and Lord Stafford.

Owing to ill-health, Lord Liverpool resigned in March 1827, and the King sent for Canning, who advised him, unless he were prepared to make concessions on the question of Catholic Emancipation, to summon an exclusively Protestant Ministry, which he would support, but would not join. The Duke of Wellington and Peel advised that there should not be an exclusively Protestant Ministry. The three Ministers were willing to join a neutral administration, but, as it happened, there was no one under whom they would all serve.

[1] Patterson's sister, Elizabeth, married Jérôme Buonaparte, Napoleon's youngest brother.

"The matter stood as follows," Mr. Kebbel has summed it up admirably: "If an anti-Catholic premier was appointed over Canning's head, solely on religious grounds, there was a clear violation of neutrality; if a pro-Catholic was appointed, then it could be nobody but Canning. He himself would not accept the first alternative, nor Peel and Wellington the second. The choice, therefore, lay between Canning without these, and these without Canning." On April 10 the King appointed Canning Prime Minister, and Wellington, Peel, Bathurst, Eldon, and others declined to serve under him, whereupon he coalesced with the Whigs, and formed his Cabinet. Wellesley, of course, retained the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland.

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Most private and confidential — *Foreign Office*
April 24, 1827

I learn from Mr. (or, as he will be before the end of the week, Lord) Plunket, that you complain of not having heard from me. If I could find time to describe to you my daily occupation for any one of the last ten days, you would be surprised, not that I have not written before, but that I write now. Except for a few hours of scanty and interrupted sleep, I have not been free from the necessity of listening or talking—occupations most unpropitious to correspondence with absent friends.

In truth, I had nothing specific to say to you,

nor have even now, for the arrangements go on but slowly, owing to causes—which you, who remember our Whig and Tory negotiations in 1812, can well conceive.

As to what relates to yourself, I purposely deferred writing to you, because I wished first to ascertain the opinions of the chairman and deputy-chairman as to the Indian Government, which I had been led to believe, by authority on which I thought I could rely, would be agreeable to you after your relinquishment of the Government of Ireland—*if it came to you properly offered.*

To this condition it was absolutely necessary that the first opening with the Chairs should be made without your knowledge, and that I should be able so to state it. I accordingly saw them the very day after I kissed hands.

I was to receive their answer in a week. In the interval I have received your letter, which, of course, made any answer from the Chairs superfluous.

I am sorry that I was misinformed as to your wishes.

P.S. *You* have been entirely misinformed if you have been led to believe that your office has been offered to *any other person*, although it is perfectly true that, in discussions, the Lord-Lieutenancy of Ireland, like all other offices, has been talked over, with reference to future and contingent arrangements. How is it possible that a Government should fall to pieces, without entailing the necessity of considering every part of it with a view to its reconstruction ?[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 265.

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Foreign Office: April 27, 1827

I think you will not disapprove of William Lamb[1] as successor to Mr. Goulburn.

If not, will you have the goodness to direct the usual letter of appointment (which I understand comes from your side of the water) to be written?

P.S. Our arrangements are only this moment settled. I enclose a list. There are Whigs, as you see, in it, earnest of future and of present support. The country will like the *gradual* infusion better than a more precipitate one.[2]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Foreign Office: April 27, 1827*

You are aware, no doubt, of Plunket's destination to the House of Lords and the Rolls, and of the high-mindedness with which he rejected the latter, when he found *the profession* in England adverse to that appointment.

Plunket, thus peered but not *placed*,[1] has turned

[1] William Lamb, second Viscount Melbourne (1779-1848). A strong adherent of the Catholic Emancipation party; Chief Secretary for Ireland under Canning, 1827, and Wellington, 1828. Succeeded his father in 1829 and became Home Secretary under Grey, 1830-4. He formed a Ministry and resigned in 1834, was Prime Minister for six years from 1835, and acted as adviser to Queen Victoria until 1841, when he resigned office.

[2] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 267.

[3] Plunket (*see ante*, p. 142, note) was in 1827 raised to the peerage and made Master of the Rolls, but the opposition of the English Bar to the appointment of an Irish lawyer was so strong that he resigned in a few days. He was then appointed Chief Justice of the Common Pleas in Ireland, and in 1830 was made Lord Chancellor of Ireland, which position he held for eleven years.

his thoughts to the Chief Justice's seat in Ireland, and is very desirous that Lord Rosebery should be sounded as to his willingness to resign. It is imagined, I know not how truly, that a step in the Irish peerage would tempt him. If so, will you have the kindness to find the mode of administering that temptation?

Plunket will be of infinite use to us in the House of Lords, but his substantial interests must not be sacrificed (if we can help it) to our convenience.[1]

When Canning became Prime Minister, Wellington resigned the office of Commander-in-Chief. He was, he declared, dissatisfied with the tone of one of Canning's letters, but that can scarcely have been the reason for retiring from his high office. It was known that when Liverpool retired Peel had suggested to Canning that Wellington should become Prime Minister, but that Canning had chosen himself to be the head of the administration. Canning's friends and supporters declared that jealousy was at the root of Wellington's decision, but this the soldier-statesman repudiated scornfully in the House of Lords on May 2, declaring that it was inconceivable that he should have dreamt of giving up the command of the army for "a station to the duties of which I was unaccustomed, in which I was not wished, and for which I was not qualified." Yet

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 268.

it must be remembered that within two years Wellington with no reluctance accepted an invitation to form a Government.

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Downing Street*
May 15, 1827

To say that I have not an hour in the day to myself for private correspondence is little—I have not five minutes. I am up before the world this morning, in hopes of finding time to write to you, but I daresay I shall be interrupted before I have written two pages ; and, the influx of the world once begun, I have no peace, till the hour when the worry of interviews is merged in the worry of the House of Commons.

I wish it were possible for me to give you in a few words the history of all that has been passing here, but it is not so.

The enclosed copies of letters which have passed between me and the Duke of Wellington, since his speech in the House of Lords, will put you in possession of some of the most prominent points of difference and disputation. The principle on which the two parties acted were these. The Protestant part of the Government did me the honour to think that they could not make an administration without me, but wished to have me as *cheap* as possible, to task me to the utmost for their support in the House of Commons and in the Foreign Office, but to place over me a Protestant master,

To make the drudging goblin sweat
To earn his cream bowl duly set,

but to repress all higher aspirations as strictly as if I were of another species than their Lordships.

My determination was either to inherit poor Lord Liverpool's situation in the Government, or retire—a determination which I announced to the King at the very first audience that I had of His Majesty (which was not till the middle of March) and from which I never swerved for a moment. To have done otherwise would have been to *admit*, in my own person, that the holding of a Catholic opinion disqualified *ipso facto* for the first situation in the Government.

I *am*—and *have been* twenty times—interrupted. But I think it better to send off this letter (with its enclosures) imperfect, as it is, than put it by for the chance of finding time to complete it.

I hope to have an opportunity of writing to you more fully by a safe conveyance very shortly.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Downing Street*
May 22, 1827

The return of Colonel Shawe (for the delay of which I am in a great degree answerable) affords me the opportunity, to which I have been long looking forward, of putting you in possession of all that has been passing, as well respecting public affairs in general as respecting yourself.

The difficulties of my position have been such

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 269.

that I have had enough to do to overcome them, without attempting to describe their amount or to detail the progress of my struggle with them to anyone. *I think* they are now abating. The Government is, I really believe, established; but in what strength I fear we shall hardly have an opportunity afforded to us of showing by division in either House of Parliament before the close of the session. In the House of Commons our majority would be immense. In the House of Lords the enemy would make more head (*i.e.*, numerically, not morally). But in the House the Corn Bill must not be taken as a criterion—so many of the peers had pledged themselves, even in Lord Liverpool's time, to vote against it.

I have not continued my correspondence with the Duke of Wellington, the tone of *his* letter leading me to apprehend that it might degenerate into a controversy, which was of all things what I least desired. It appeared to me, from that letter, I confess, that he intended to shut the door which I had wished to open. But I have received so many positive assurances from persons with whom he has conversed upon the subject that such was not his intention, and so many indications have, at the same time, reached the King of his willingness to return to the *command of the army*, that it has been thought advisable that the King should let him know that His Majesty is prepared to permit the Duke to withdraw that resignation. I transmitted to him last night a very kind letter from the King to this effect. I sincerely hope that he will avail himself of the

opening thus made for him. It were a pity that one false move, whether of temper or of policy, should deprive the country of his *military* services; and his acceptance of the command will probably dissipate the remains of the wretched, disgraceful, and disgusting opposition which still harasses us in both Houses of Parliament, but without making any way in either. Possibly, before I close this letter, I may be enabled to apprise you of the result.

To come now nearer to our concerns.

The simultaneous withdrawing of all my Protestant colleagues at once disabled me from forming the Cabinet as the King wished, and as I had intended in a manner which should *show* the division of opinions upon the Catholic question. The new Chancellor[1] was the only member of it professing the anti-Catholic opinion. We contrived to get Lord Derby back, and subsequently Lord Anglesey, whose *last* vote (in 1827) was anti-Catholic (though all his preceding ones had been of the other complexion), has been added to our number. Three Protestants to nine originally, and, since the accession of the Whigs, to twelve Catholic members! Thus foiled in England —but acquiescing with the most perfect confidence and good humour, the King insisted the more strenuously upon a due infusion of Protestantism into the Irish Government. Had Goulburn remained, or could I upon his secession have replaced him by a Protestant, I *might* have been able to satisfy His Majesty. But Goulburn's resignation,

[1] Lord Lyndhurst.

with the utter impossibility of finding a successor of the same kidney (there is literally but one such man in the service of Government, Mr. Herries,[1] and for him it was wholly hopeless to find a successor in his present situation as Secretary of the Treasury), rendered His Majesty more impatient for that change in the Lord-Lieutenancy which I understood from His Majesty to have been settled between him, Lord Liverpool, and (I suppose) Mr. Peel, as to be necessarily consequent upon the issue (whatever that might be) of the first discussion of the Catholic question in the new Parliament.

My impression that such a settlement had been agreed upon was confirmed by all that Lord Liverpool had said to me for the last eighteen months before his illness: of his wish to have the trial of strength on the Catholic question as early as possible in the new Parliament. If the issue should be in favour of the Catholics—and he (Liverpool) fully expected it to be so—he would (in my conscience, I believe) have retired, recommending to the King to form a Government fit to manage the final adjustment of the question, and to the House of Lords to acquiesce in that adjustment. In the other event he would, I presume, have thought himself entitled to expect that the question should have been suffered to sleep for a while—an expectation which might, or might not, have been realised.

[1] John Charles Herries (1778-1855) entered Parliament in 1823. He became Chancellor of the Exchequer in Goderich's Ministry, 1827. He was President of the Board of Trade in 1830, and held office under Peel and again under Derby.

With these views Liverpool was above all things anxious that no change whatever should take place during the year of abeyance preceding the dissolution of Parliament. He required the prolongation of your stay in Ireland; he persuaded the Lord Chancellor (of Ireland) to recall his resignation; he proposed that the new Parliament should find everything exactly as it then stood in official arrangements. He was scrupulously impartial, I can bear witness for him, in Parliamentary arrangements, so far as the distribution of seats in the power of the Government could go—for of ten seats placed at his disposal half were given to Protestants and half to Catholics, friends of the administration. I cannot answer for it that the like impartiality was observed by the persons acting under him. I believe otherwise, and I believe still more that after his seizure, and at the moment when the Catholic question was brought on for discussion, no effort was left unestablished by those into whose hands the power of the Treasury fell, to influence the decision in the way in which it actually turned.

Be all that as it may, I found the King's mind thoroughly impressed with the notion of the existence of a compact, of something more than an understanding, that a change was to take place in the Government of Ireland at the end of the present session of Parliament; a compact wholly connected with antecedent events, and wholly unconnected with the present change of administration. His Majesty considered the Chancellor as included in this change. His Majesty wrote to

Lord Manners not to resign in a hurry, because His Majesty apprehended that he might otherwise be instigated to strike with the rest of the Ultras, and so anticipate the natural time of his removal, and give to the renovation of the Irish Government the air of an angry breaking-up, which of all things the King wished to avoid.

As I could not dispute the King's construction of what had been Lord Liverpool's intention—as there was no consideration devised from the *time* of your residence in Ireland to warrant my insisting on the prolongation of it; as there was obviously nothing to be done this year towards the forwarding of the Catholic question in Ireland, after its unexpected defeat in the House of Commons; and as the composition of the new administration was (as I have said) from the force of circumstances so almost exclusively Catholic that I could hardly accuse the King of unreasonableness in wishing to give a more impartial complexion to the Government of Ireland, I sincerely thought that the best thing that I could do for you was, instead of endeavouring to gain for you a few months' prolongation of your viceroyalty, to seek to make your retirement from it, for which the time was (according to all usage) so fully assured, honourable and satisfactory.

The existing vacancy in the Government of India appeared to me to afford the means of such an arrangement.

I have already told you—and I will not, therefore, repeat at length here—that I was fortified in this opinion by that of more than one of the

persons who (as I believed) knew your wishes best, and who (I am sure) tendered your interests more clearly. I grieve that I was misled. But I had in no degree committed *you* before I discovered my error. However unacceptable the government of India may be (as I now understand it to be) to you, I have not thought it right to let it go out of my hands until I see whether it can be turned, in any way, to your advantage.

Shall I open the Embassy to Vienna to you by recommending Sir Henry Wellesley for the succession to Lord Amherst?

Answer me this question frankly, and as soon as you conveniently can. I will do and say nothing, in the meantime, to commit you or myself or Henry Wellesley. I will not write to him till I have heard from you; nor then unless your answer is affirmative—for it is *only* on your account that I should think of that appointment. I have, however, reason to know that he (Henry Wellesley) would accept it if tendered to him; and I have reason to believe that I could obtain it for him. But there is no time to lose in coming to the decision, as the Court of Directors are anxious for a nomination, in order to relieve Amherst, who presses to come home, and to avoid an interregnum in India. This necessity of haste, however, extends only to the Indian arrangement, not to your return from Ireland.

No steps need be taken as to the appointment of your successor till after the close of the session.

There can, I trust, be no doubt on your part of the feelings which dictate this proposal.

If you think that the termination of your government ought to be marked by some signal proof of the King's approbation, such as a rise in your *English* peerage, say so, without scruple, and I will propose it. But having once acted for you in the faith of what appeared to me and others to be for your advantage, I hesitate to do so again without a precise knowledge of your wishes.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Downing Street*
May 24, 1827

I said, in my letter of yesterday, that I should perhaps be enabled before Colonel Shawe's departure to report to you the result of the overture to the Duke of Wellington. Here it is.

I permit myself no comment on it.[2]

[ENCLOSURE A]

Memorandum

April 14, 1827

From the commencement of Lord Liverpool's illness the Duke of Wellington never went near the King but when he was sent for, and never spoke to him (except on the business of his own department) but when he was spoken to. He did not wish to interfere in the arrangement of the new Government. The accusations against him in the papers of a wish to settle the Government in his own way, and of intriguing to obtain the situation of Prime Minister for himself, and also

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 272.
[2] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 287.

of encouraging a faction or a combination of the Protestant members of the Cabinet and others for the purpose of opposing Mr. Canning's appointment to the head of the Government, are particularly unjust. On the contrary, he had prevented the formation of such a faction. He had been spoken to on the subject, and he discouraged it, and he had also discouraged some proposals of that party to put him forward as a candidate for the situation of Prime Minister. He said his wish was to remain in the situation he then filled, which suited his taste, and for which he felt that he was qualified, whereas he did not think himself qualified for the situation of Prime Minister, for which no man was duly qualified who was not an experienced speaker in Parliament. Circumstances might, he said, be conceived under which it would be his duty to accept the situation if he were called upon by the King to do so ; but he would be most reluctant under any circumstances to accept an office for which he did not profess all the requisite qualifications. As his sentiments on this subject were well known, he had hoped to escape the imputations now brought against him.

He said that some days ago Mr. Canning told him he had a plan in contemplation for reconstructing the Government, and that he thought of putting Mr. Robinson at the head of it. On the 10th inst. the Duke received a note from Mr. Canning saying he had just returned from an audience with the King at which His Majesty had been pleased to command him to form an arrangement as speedily as possible for

reconstructing the Government, and saying how much the success of the arrangement would depend upon his Grace's concurrence. The Duke seems to have thought the invitation a cold one, especially when contrasted with the letters he saw to other members of the Cabinet who were requested to call on Mr. Canning to hear from him his explanation of his plan. The Duke, however, did not mean to show any dissatisfaction at this distinction, but adverting to what Mr. Canning had told him shortly before of his intention to put another person than himself in the situation of Premier, he wrote to acknowledge the receipt of Mr. Canning's letter, and before he replied to his obliging communication regarding the Cabinet, he begged to know who Mr. Canning recommended to be placed at the head of the Government. Mr. Canning, perhaps forgetting the conversation of a few days before, seems to have taken offence at this question (as if the Duke did not conceive it possible that *he*, Mr. Canning, could be the person), and he replied in a manner that displeased the Duke. The substance of Mr. Canning's answer was as follows: He said that as it had always been understood that the person who received the King's commands to submit an arrangement for a Government was the person intended to be at the head of it, it had not occurred to him to be necessary to say so to the Duke of Wellington; that he had laid the correspondence before the King, and was commanded to say that His Majesty had not intended on this occasion to depart from the usual practice in such cases.

I cannot rely upon my memory for more than the substance, but I recollect distinctly that the Duke conceived that the first letter was cold, and that the second letter in reply to his question was sneering and uncivil, and he felt it the more as it appeared to be written by the King's authority. He accordingly wrote a calm letter to Mr. Canning resigning his ministerial offices, and he afterwards wrote to the King giving his reasons for thinking that a Government formed upon the principle proposed by Mr. Canning would not have the confidence of the country or be beneficial for His Majesty's service, and he therefore requested His Majesty's permission to retire. To that letter, after the lapse of a day (and since I saw the Duke), he received a short answer from the King saying that he had received his Grace's resignation with great concern.

I saw the Duke on Saturday morning before he had received the King's answer. He desired me to mention the leading circumstances to your Excellency, and declared that I knew as much of the case after that statement as he did himself.

He said he did not think he could have done otherwise after the second letter he had received from Mr. Canning.

The Duke, however, stated other considerations which (without reference to the letter) would have rendered it difficult for him to remain in the Cabinet with Mr. Canning at the head of the Government. But he would have been quite willing to have gone with him if any steady man

had been put at the head of it; Lord Bathurst or Lord Melville would have satisfied him. He wanted rather that a person of the same opinions on the Catholic question with himself should be Prime Minister, but he would not have separated from his colleagues on that account, as is proved by his mentioning Lord Melville. But he tells the King that as he had great doubt of the success of several of the late innovations, and knew that some of them must be abandoned, he anticipated great difficulty from those measures, and if Mr. Robinson, who concurs with Mr. Canning in that system, were at the head it would be difficult for those who entertained a contrary opinion to go on for any time. Of course the same difficulty was to be apprehended, Mr. Canning being at the head.

Differing on these material points, and seeing in Mr. Canning's correspondence a lack of cordiality towards himself, he feared that if he retained the office of Commander-in-Chief his constant communication with the King in that capacity would render him liable to Mr. Canning's suspicion of thwarting his measures, and he therefore thought it better to retire altogether whilst he could do so with honour.

April 16

P.S. The above is the substance of what his Grace said. He wished me to mention it to your Excellency in order that you might know the truth, and he conceived that I would leave town next day, and he wished to contradict several misrepresentations of his conduct and motives

which appeared in the newspapers of Saturday morning when I saw his Grace.[1]

[Enclosure B]

George Canning *to* The Duke of Wellington

Downing Street: May 5, 1827

I have read the report of your Grace's speech in the House of Lords, from which I learn, in confirmation of rumours hitherto incredible to me, that your resignation is attributed by you, in part at least, to the letters which I addressed to your Grace on the 10th and 11th of last month. As I am sure that the misrepresentations with which the statements recorded in the newspapers abound must have been involuntary, I offer to your Grace some explanations upon them, without any apprehension that the motives of my doing so should be mistaken.

In the first place you are made to say: "I was not desired by the Right Hon. gentleman to come, nor was I referred to anybody for explanation. To me the Right Hon. gentleman neither came nor sent, but I have since heard that *explanations were given to others of our colleagues*. The Right Hon. gentleman either invited *all* to call upon him, or else he waited upon *them*, or sent a friend."

Now this is entirely an error. I received the King's commands to form an administration so late in the afternoon of Tuesday the 10th that (the day fixed for the adjournment of Parliament being Thursday the 12th) I had not an instant to lose in proceeding to the execution of those commands.

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 288.

Lord Grenville, Mr. Huskisson, and Mr. Planta[1] happening to be at my office when I returned from the King, I requested Lord Grenville to convey to Lord Harrowby, Mr. Huskisson to Lord Melville and Mr. Wynn, and Mr. Planta to Mr. Robinson *verbally* the same announcement which I addressed at the same time in writing to Lord Bathurst, to Lord Westmorland, to Lord Bexley, and to your Grace.

I wrote also to the Lord Chancellor to ask leave to call upon his Lordship in the evening, and I wrote to Mr. Peel to ask him to call here; but subsequently (Mr. Peel being at the House of Commons when my first letter was sent to him) I offered to call upon him on my return from the Lord Chancellor, which I did.

What your Grace means by "explanations given to others, and not to you" I really cannot comprehend. I had already stated to your Grace in the fullest detail all that passed at my audience with the King at Windsor. I had absolutely nothing more to tell, with the exception of the simple fact announced to your Grace in my letter of the 10th, that: "The King had directed me to lay before His Majesty with as little loss of time as possible a plan of arrangements for the reconstruction of the administration."

Fault is found by your Grace with the style or tone of my letters of the 10th and 11th.

[1] Joseph Planta (1787-1847), was originally a clerk in the Foreign Office. He was private secretary to Canning, 1807-1809, and secretary to Lord Castlereagh on the mission that resulted in the Treaty of Paris, 1814. He was subsequently employed on other diplomatic service. From 1827 to 1830 he was one of the joint secretaries of the Treasury.

I have looked them over and over again in search of the supposed objectionable passages, but I confess I cannot discover any such. The address "My dear Duke of Wellington" is precisely the same as has been uniformly employed in our private correspondence, and if some more formal words are introduced at the conclusion, it should be remembered that the letter was in a certain degree of an *official* character, and one the copy of which was to be submitted to the King. I recollect perfectly well that I doubted for a moment whether I should introduce those slight formalities or not—a doubt which, it appears, I decided unluckily, but certainly with no intention of offending.

My letter of the 11th I submitted to His Majesty before I sent it, simply because when a doubt has been expressed in any quarter (more especially in one so important) as to my position with respect to His Majesty, it became necessary for me to have His Majesty's authority to confirm my description of it.

Of your Grace's answer to my letter of the 10th I will not permit myself to speak. I am willing that the world shall judge of it.

The question, whether the individual employed to form an administration is "usually" placed at the head of it, is one upon which, till the receipt of that letter of your Grace's, I did not suspect a difference of opinion to exist.

Your Grace, indeed, is made to say, in justification of your doubt upon the subject, that "when, upon the death of Mr. Perceval, Lord Liverpool

waited upon Mr. Canning to propose to him to become a member of the administration then about to be formed, the first question put to the noble Lord by Mr. Canning was: "Who is to be the First Lord of the Treasury?"

With your Grace's leave this is *not* the question that I put, nor is it so stated in the printed record from which you draw your information.

I beg your Grace to turn again to that record, when you will find the passage to run thus: "In answer to *a question put by me*, Lord Liverpool stated that *his colleagues were desirous* that he should be appointed to the office of First Lord of the Treasury." Now the question to which this was an answer was *not:* "Who is to be First Lord of the Treasury?" but: "Are you what you are by election of your colleagues?" I had heard a rumour to that effect, which I took this occasion of verifying. Your Grace has on a recent occasion agreed with me and with Mr. Peel in objecting to such a mode of constituting a First Minister.

Your Grace states further that Lord Wellesley and Lord Moira successfully conducted in 1812 negotiations for the formation of a Government without having previously accepted office. This may be true of Lord Wellesley. Of Lord Moira I speak with less certainty. But your Grace must recollect that both these negotiations failed, and my opinion was, at the time, and has always since been, that they failed mainly because Lord Wellesley and Lord Moira did not in the outset ascertain and assert their own precise situation as Ministers.

Your Grace will see, then, that the transactions of 1812 were full in my mind, but that I considered them not as precedents but as warnings.

There are two very different versions of what your Grace said about Mr. Robinson's possible appointment to be First Lord of the Treasury. In one (the new *Times*) your Grace is made to say : " I had a conversation with Mr. Canning, in which he stated that one of the plans submitted by him to His Majesty's consideration was to call the then Chancellor of the Exchequer to the House of Lords, conferring upon him the office of First Lord of the Treasury ; and this Mr. Canning stated as one of the modes of keeping men together. But I had no difficulty in expressing my entire persuasion that no scheme could be devised less calculated to produce the effect contemplated, *viz.*, that of keeping a Government together."

In the other (old *Times*) your Grace is reported to have said : " I had a conversation with Mr. Canning, in which he stated to me that, in case His Majesty should desire him to reconstruct the Government, one of his plans was to recommend that Mr. Robinson, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, should be called up to your Lordships' house, and should be made First Lord of the Treasury ; and I confess to your Lordships that it was my intention, if I had heard anything more of that scheme, to have proposed such a modification of it as would have kept the members of the old administration together."

If the latter version be the correct one, and if the sort of " modification " which your Grace

would have proposed was the substitution for Mr. Robinson of a peer holding your Grace's opinions on the Catholic question, the proposition would have resolved itself into one which I had from the beginning, and invariably, rejected.

I do not believe, therefore, that any good could have arisen from a discussion with your Grace on the subject of that particular arrangement.

Your Grace evidently was determined to insist upon the superinduction of an anti-Catholic First Minister over my head, on the principle which, if it was not (as your Grace does me the honour to say repeatedly it was not) one of personal objection to me, could be no other than this—that an individual holding *my* opinions upon the Catholic question was *ipso facto* disqualified from occupying that post.

I, on the other hand, was determined, as your Grace from the beginning perfectly well knew, to quit the Government rather than submit to the degradation of exhibiting in my person the exemplification of that principle of proscription.

We had long understood each other distinctly on this main point, and there could be no use in discussing it unless your Grace was prepared to waive your objection.

But a head of the Government is not always *necessarily* "First Lord of the Treasury."

In the reign of George I., Lord Townsend as Secretary of State was *the* Minister, while Sir Robert Walpole, though uniting the offices of First Lord of Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer, acted under him. In the Seven

Years' War Mr. Pitt is generally supposed to have been *the* Minister, while the Duke of Newcastle was at the head of the Treasury (but I think this instance doubtful). In the year 1766 Lord Chatham unquestionably formed an administration in which he took to himself the comparatively unimportant post of Privy Seal, and was in that post *the* Minister, putting the Duke of Grafton at the head of the Treasury.

Now it was His Majesty's especial desire that I should retain the seals of the Foreign Department, uniting with that department the attributes of First Minister. And the instance of Mr. Pitt during the Seven Years' War was particularly pressed upon me, as showing such an arrangement to be practicable.

If practicable I had not the slightest objection to it. I liked my then office a thousand times better than any other, and I had no ambition for the title of First Lord of the Treasury, provided there were no misapprehension as to *where* the chief power of the Government was to reside.

It was on these grounds that I stated to your Grace in our conversation of the 2nd of April my willingness to remain where I was, Mr. Robinson going to the House of Lords, with the *Department* of First Lord of the Treasury. I presently found, however, that it would be impracticable to make this arrangement without incurring one or other of two inconveniences: either the new First Lord of the Treasury would have been considered as in effect First Minister, or he might have been induced to think himself degraded by the abstraction of

the attributes most usually attached (in latter times) to that office.

This second inconvenience I should deeply have lamented; the former was the very one the avoiding of which I had declared from the beginning to be a *sine quâ non* condition of my acquiescence in any arrangements.

The only advice which I tendered to His Majesty was to form an exclusively anti-Catholic administration—not certainly from an abstract partiality to such an administration, but because I thought it of the utmost importance to His Majesty's ease and comfort that His Majesty should clearly ascertain whether they who advised His Majesty to proscribe a Minister favourable to the Catholic claims would undertake to form a Government in their own sense. I knew not what had been the advice of His Majesty's other counsellors upon this point, nor what was His Majesty's final decision upon it, till I went into the closet on the 10th of April.

There is but one other part of your Grace's speech which appears to call for any observations from me.

Your Grace emphatically says that *your* being at the head of the Government was "wholly out of the question."

I learnt this opinion of your Grace with sincere pleasure. The union of the whole power of the state, civil and military, in the same hands (for your Grace as Prime Minister could never have effectually divested yourself of your influence over the army) would certainly, in my opinion, have constituted a station too great for *any subject*,

however eminent, or however meritorious, and one incompatible with the practice of a free constitution. Nothing would have induced me to serve under such a form of Government, and I am rejoiced to find that your Grace's opinion was always against such an arrangement.

But, I confess, I am surprised that, such being your Grace's fixed opinion, it should, nevertheless, have been proposed to me, as it was more than once, and up to the 9th of April inclusive, to concur in placing your Grace at the head of the Government. There is in this apparent contradiction a mystery which I cannot explain.

In rejecting, however, as I did, that proposition, I do assure your Grace I was not actuated by any feeling unfriendly or disrespectful to your Grace, nor am I conscious of any such feeling now. I take nothing personally amiss in your Grace's speech. I retain a recollection corresponding with your own of the intercourse which has for some years subsisted between us on political affairs, and there is not in the nation, or in the army itself, an individual who regrets more deeply than I do that your Grace should have thought it necessary to withdraw from the command of the army at the same time that you resigned your seat in the Cabinet.

P.S. I must request you to excuse me for having employed another hand in this letter. I kept the draft by me twenty-four hours, in the hope of finding time to transcribe it myself, but it has really been out of my power to do so.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 292.

[ENCLOSURE C]

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON *to* GEORGE CANNING

London: May 6, 1827

As you told me yesterday at the Royal Academy that you had written to me in order to avoid further discussion in Parliament upon the subject of my resignation (which I regret that I was ever under the necessity of discussing in Parliament), I willingly proceed to state to you the general purport of what I said in the House of Lords on the points referred to by you.

I am very much surprised that you should not have known till after that discussion, and that you should have doubted the truth of the rumours which stated that my resignation was attributed by me to the letters which you had written to me on the 10th and 11th of last month. I conclude that you advised His Majesty's answer of the 13th to my letter of the 12th April, and at all events you must have seen the letter in which I expressed the grief and pain I felt in requesting His Majesty to excuse me from attendance in his councils; and in consequence thereof, and *adverting to the tenor of the letters* which I had received from His Majesty's Minister by His Majesty's command, in asking His Majesty's permission to lay at his feet those offices which connected me with his Government.

I have not read the newspapers, and I do not know whether they have accurately reported what I said in the House of Lords. I did say that in your letter to me of the 10th April there were two

important omissions—the first, who were to be my colleagues; the second, who was to be the head of the Government. This is fact, as you will see on reference to your letter.

I did likewise say that I was not invited to receive further explanations, as Lord Westmorland (to whom by-the-bye your letter contained the explanation that his colleagues were to be in the Cabinet with him, which was omitted in that to myself) and Lord Bathurst were; nor referred to anybody for explanation, as Lord Melville and Lord Harrowby were, and as it now appears Wynn and Mr. Robinson were; and in the House of Lords I also said that to some you went yourself, as for instance to the Chancellor and to Mr. Peel.

But I admitted in the House of Lords, as I do now, that although I was struck by the omission in the letter of the 10th inst. addressed to myself, when I wrote to you on that night, and although I thought it but a very cold invitation to belong to the Cabinet, yet I was not aware, till afterwards, of the different mode of communication adopted towards others.

I have only further to observe upon the mode of concluding your letter to me, which you admit was not the usual one and which new mode you doubted whether to introduce or not, that in the letter addressed to Lord Bathurst, and to Lord Westmorland, which I presume were, equally with that addressed to me, to be laid before the King, you did not think it necessary to introduce such or other formality.

I said in the House of Lords, and I here repeat, that the question in my letter of the 10th April was asked for the purpose of obtaining the information which yours of the 10th did not convey; and that my conversation with you on the 2nd had given me reason to believe that you had had in contemplation another arrangement (*viz.*, that Mr. Robinson should be called to the House of Lords, and be made First Lord of the Treasury), in case the King should have proposed to you to lay before His Majesty a plan for the reconstruction of the administration.

Had you stated in answer to my question, as you might have done, that you still had that arrangement in contemplation, I would have taken the liberty of suggesting to you some other arrangement, better calculated, as I thought, to keep the Government together.

I likewise said in the House of Lords that I did not think the practice as stated by you in your letter of the 11th was so general as to induce me to assign a meaning to the words of your letter of the 10th which in my opinion they did not convey, more particularly when taking into consideration what you had yourself said to me respecting your plans.

In relation to the practice, I referred to the record of the transactions of 1812, from which it appears clearly that there were two instances of persons of high rank and station and reputation employed by his present Majesty to make arrangements for forming a Ministry; and that these persons themselves stated that it was not settled

that they were to be the head of such administrations.

It does not signify in my view of the case whether the want of success of these persons was to be attributed to that fact or not.

I might have quoted another instance—that of the formation of the last Ministry under the Duke of Portland, of which I was perfectly aware when I wrote to you on the 10th April, and of course when I addressed the House of Lords.

I was not in England in 1812, and knew nothing of the transactions of that period excepting what is in the record above referred to ; and I conceived that your question to Lord Liverpool was asked, as mine certainly was to you, for the purpose of obtaining information as to who was the person to be the head of the Government, and not in what mode he came to be placed in that situation. I must add that I was confirmed in that impression by the perusal of the speech which you made in the House of Commons in May 1812, in which you declared your reasons for declining to become a member of the administration. Your objection was not to the manner in which Lord Liverpool had been appointed to be the head of the Government, but mainly that a person differing from you on the Roman Catholic question was to exercise the influence of the Government.

I did not state in the House of Lords, nor is it necessary that I should now state, what was the suggestion which I intended to make to you, in case you had answered my letter of the 10th,

as I expected you would, *viz.*, that you still thought of Mr. Robinson.

I am one of those who think it desirable that the King in forming his Ministry should select a person for its head of the same general opinions with himself upon the great questions of policy, whether foreign or domestic; and particularly in a case likely to come frequently under discussion, on which the opinions of the Empire are so divided as to render it impossible to form an efficient Ministry composed exclusively of persons of either opinion.

I judged, from the conversation which I had with His Majesty at Windsor, that His Majesty did consider it important that the administration should be composed of persons of both opinions upon the Roman Catholic question, and that the head of the Government should be of the same opinion with His Majesty, and that it was essential that he should continue to enjoy the benefit of your services.

But I do not know where you found the evidence, that I was determined not to act with any person as First Minister who did not entertain anti-Catholic opinions.

Neither have I learnt where or when I was to know perfectly well that you were determined to quit the Government rather than submit to what you term the degradation of exhibiting in your person the exemplification of that principle of supposed proscription.

I never had but one conversation with you upon the subject of the Government, and that was on

the 2nd April. In that conversation, although we discussed the principle of exclusion from office on the score of Catholic opinions, it was not in reference to your own alleged right to be First Minister. Indeed, this was so much the case that I perfectly recollect stating to you that the conclusion to which I understood we had come was that the arrangement must include persons of both opinions and no more; and that I should state that to be the conclusion, as I did in fact so state to Mr. Peel.

Although, however, I did not know that you claimed to be First Minister as a *sine quâ non*, I was very sensible that to succeed to this post was a reasonable object of ambition to you. It never occurred to me that any man could have a right to insist on this post as a *sine quâ non*, and I thought it not impossible that when you should come to consider the inconvenience to yourself as well as to the public interests of your being the First Minister, taking into account the history of your opinions and conduct and speeches upon the Roman Catholic question even to the last, and contrasting in your mind such opinions of yours with those of the King, you might have consented to act in a Government which was avowedly to be formed upon the principles of Lord Liverpool's administration, in the same relation to the Government in which you had stood when Lord Liverpool was at its head.

I was mistaken in these expectations, but there was certainly nothing in them disrespectful or unfriendly towards you.

I never recommended to the King to form an administration composed exclusively of persons entertaining the opinion that no further concessions ought to be made to the Roman Catholics. I should have declined to serve His Majesty in his councils as one of such an administration, because I am convinced that such an administration would be under existing circumstances too weak to carry on the Government. The attempt, therefore, to form such an exclusive administration would in my opinion be the greatest misfortune that could happen to His Majesty and the public ; and I must add that His Majesty's honour and welfare and that of the State are the circumstances which I think ought on this subject to be considered principally and in priority to the claims and pretensions of any individuals.

It is not necessary that I should enter into the discussion whether as the head of the Government you ought to be First Lord of the Treasury. In modern times so much power has been given to the Treasury over the expenditure of other departments of the Government, and it is so necessary now for the Treasury to exercise that power, and it would be so inconvenient to have that power exercised by a subordinate Minister, that I believe you will find it to be most embarrassing, if not impossible, for the First Minister to hold any other office.

In respect to myself, I did say in the House of Lords that I had always considered myself out of the question, as His Majesty also had, when speaking to me of the affliction visited upon us

all in the person of Lord Liverpool. Considering myself out of the question on account of the painful professional sacrifices which I should have had to make in relinquishing the office of Commander-in-Chief, and still more on account of the want of personal qualifications necessary in my opinion to enable any man to perform the duties of the head of the Government to the advantage of His Majesty, and to his own honour, it is not necessary that I should discuss whether a high military reputation is or is not a disqualification for office. Whatever others may have thought or said about me, and whatever may have been the proposition, and whenever made to you, it was not made in concert with me, and still less at my suggestion.

There remains only one topic in your letter to which I have not adverted, and it relates to my resignation of the command of the army. I considered your letters to me, and most particularly the one of the 11th April, in which, be it observed, you state that you had previously submitted it to His Majesty, to have placed me in such a relation towards His Majesty, and towards yourself as his First Minister, as to render it impossible for me to continue in my office of Commander-in-Chief.

I could not be otherwise than in constant confidential relations with His Majesty on the one hand, and with yourself on the other, as you will find by-and-bye, when you shall come to conduct the duties of the office of First Lord of the Treasury; and it was impossible for me to look

for that personal goodwill and confidence in such communications which are absolutely necessary and which I must deserve, after I had received from you a letter in which I thought you had made use of a tone of rebuke not provoked by anything contained in my letter to you, and for which the sanction of His Majesty was, as I think very unnecessarily, obtained.

I know what I owe to His Majesty, but I should be unworthy of his favour and kindness, and quite useless to him hereafter, if I had continued to endeavour to serve him in the post of Commander-in-Chief of the army after I had received that letter.

I am not in the habit of deciding upon such matters hastily or in anger ; and the proof of this is that I never had a quarrel with any man in my life.

If I could have entertained a doubt upon the subject of your letters to me, and the course which I ought to have pursued in consequence of them, the letter which I received from His Majesty of the 13th April, written, I conclude, by your advice as his Minister, must have confirmed the impression which the preceding communications had made.

I commenced to write this letter last night, but have only now been able to finish it.—*May 7*, 2 p.m.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 311.

[Enclosure D]

The King *to* The Duke of Wellington

St. James's Palace: May 21, 1827

My dear Friend,

I learn from my Government, as well as from other quarters, that you have obligingly expressed your readiness to afford your advice, if required, upon any matters of military importance or detail that might occur.

These circumstances renew in me those feelings towards you, which, God knows (as you must know), I have long and so sincerely felt, and I hope on all occasions proved; at least it was always my intention so to do.

I cannot refrain from acquainting you that the command of the army is still open, and, if you choose to recall that resignation which it grieved me so much to receive, you have my sincere permission to do so.

Your sincere friend,

G. R.[1]

[Enclosure E]

The Duke of Wellington *to* The King

London: May 22, 1827

Your Majesty's most gracious letter of yesterday reached me last night, and I beg leave to return Your Majesty my grateful acknowledgments for your kindness.

I cannot claim the merit of having had any communication of any description with Your Majesty's Government since I quitted office. I

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 329.

did state, both to Lord Anglesey[1] and to Sir Herbert Taylor,[2] that I should be most happy to render to each of them every assistance in my power, to enable them to carry on the duties of their several offices; and to the latter in particular I have written twice, in consequence of reports which had reached me of the state of affairs in Portugal inducing me to believe that it was desirable that Your Majesty's forces in that country should be collected in one body, and encamped in the neighbourhood of Lisbon.

I have served the late King and Your Majesty for forty-two years, thirty-five of which either in the field against the enemy in command of Your Majesty's armies abroad, particularly for six years in the Peninsula, or in active political office; and even if I had not been, as I was, a party to the advice given to Your Majesty to send a body of troops to Portugal, the anxiety which I feel for the honour of Your Majesty's arms, and the gratitude which I owe to Your Majesty for Your Majesty's most gracious favour towards me, would have induced me to state my opinion to that officer who was principally con-

[1] Henry William Paget, first Marquess of Anglesey and second Earl of Uxbridge (1768-1854), soldier, served in Flanders, 1794, and in Holland, 1799. He commanded the cavalry in Spain under Moore, and at Waterloo, where he lost a leg. He was created Marquess of Anglesey, 1815. He was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland in 1828, succeeding Wellesley.

[2] Sir Herbert Taylor (1775-1832), Lieutenant-General, saw active service in his youth. He was much employed about the Court. He was secretary to George III. in 1805, and subsequently served Queen Charlotte and William IV. in the same capacity.

FREDERICK, DUKE OF YORK, AND GEORGE IV SILHOUETTED AT BRIGHTON
From the National Portrait Gallery

fided in by Your Majesty in military affairs, when it appeared to me that the position of Your Majesty's troops was becoming critical.

I am delighted that my doing so has attracted Your Majesty's favourable notice; but I assure Your Majesty that I had not a notion that the existence of these letters would ever be made known to Your Majesty. Still less did I intend in writing them to manifest any desire to withdraw my resignation of the office of Commander-in-Chief.

Your Majesty has been pleased to observe that the command of the army is still open, and that if I choose to recall my resignation of that command I have Your Majesty's permission to do so.

I earnestly hope that Your Majesty will have the goodness to refer to the reasons which I stated to Your Majesty on the 12th April, and more fully to Your Majesty's Minister on the 6th of May, as having imposed upon me the painful necessity of offering to Your Majesty my resignation of the command of Your Majesty's forces.

I humbly entreat Your Majesty to bear in mind that the reasons still continue in force; and, were I under such circumstances to recall my resignation, I should by that act admit that I had not been justified in retiring, and I should disable myself from rendering that useful service to Your Majesty which it would be, as it ever has been, the pride of my life to render. All of which, together with the expression of my gratitude for the kind sentiments contained in Your Majesty's

letter to me, are submitted to Your Majesty by Your Majesty's

Most devoted subject,
WELLINGTON.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* GEORGE CANNING

Private and confidential *Phoenix Park*
June 2, 1827

Your kind and affectionate letter of the 22nd May would be quite sufficient to assure me of your continued friendship and regard, if I had ever entertained a doubt on that subject. I am incapable of harbouring any suspicion so injurious and unjust to you, and so painfully unworthy of the whole spirit and character of my mind.

It is, however, but candid to inform you that the changes which you state to have been contemplated in the Government of Ireland, on the principles and connected with the contingencies which you mention, never were in the slightest degree hinted to me by Lord Liverpool or Mr. Peel; and as I continued to the last moment to possess the full confidence and declared approbation of both those respectable persons, I cannot suppose, without injury to their high and fine integrity, that they could have entertained such a project without imparting it to me—as they well knew that I had no intention of resigning this Government before the end of the present year, which period would have brought my government nearly to the same term as that of the Duke of Richmond. With respect to the

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 331.

principle on which my government has been conducted, I desire to appeal to the late Secretary for the Home Department [Peel], my able and most upright correspondent, whether I have betrayed any partiality to any party, faction, or religion; and whether in the exercise of the Royal patronage (especially of the Church) I have not discharged my duty to the honour and advantage of His Majesty's service, and to the benefit of all the established institutions of this country, both religious and civil.

With this consciousness, I certainly little expected that any eagerness should exist to abridge my term here, merely on account of my *supposed* agreement with you on the policy of altering the laws respecting the Roman Catholic claims: I use the phrase *supposed* deliberately and steadfastly, for I desire to be informed: "Who now exactly knows the precise tenor of my opinions on that great question?" I might add: "Who can point out one act or expression of mine in this Government by which any inclination of my judgment on that matter can be referred?"

As it appears, however, to be evident that there is a great anxiety and an earnest desire for my early removal, I request you to assure His Majesty, with my humble duty and most affectionate respects, that, devoted as I ever have been to his Royal service, interests, and honour, and attached to his sacred person by the strongest ties of gratitude and respectful love, I shall resign this high and arduous trust into his hands with the same alacrity and cheerful obedience which marked

my acceptance of it in a crisis of the greatest difficulty and danger. The trust has not been impaired in my hands; but although conscious of honest, zealous, and useful service, I shall feel dissatisfied in my mind if that service should have failed to obtain His Majesty's gracious approbation. That is the only reward or honour for which I am solicitous; without that, all remuneration or distinction would be vain and without value to me. These sentiments contain sufficient replies to all your kind proposals of reward or honour: I desire none other than the continuance of His Majesty's confidence and favour, which, as they have constituted the principal pride and happiness of a long, active, and not inglorious life, will be necessary to strengthen me in any future course of public service to which His Majesty may call me; or (if I should be compelled to relinquish His Majesty's service) these blessings will suffice to render my retirement as dignified and grateful to my own mind as my services have been zealous and useful to His Majesty's dominions, and to the general interests of his great and flourishing Empire.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential — *Downing Street*
June 7, 1827

I am highly gratified with the kindness of your answer to my letter on your own affairs, but greatly perplexed with the uncertainty in which it leaves me as to what I should endeavour to do

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 337.

to meet your wishes. If I had been early apprised that a continuance of your reign in Ireland *to the end of the year* was the specific object of your contemplation, I would have done my best to secure that prolongation. Thus what was represented to me as that object was the indefinite extension, or rather, as it were, renewal of your tenure, and that I knew to be hopeless.

Even now if to come away at the end of the year rather than in the course of the summer appeared to you to be important, I could endeavour to bring about that change in the present plan. But I cannot answer for it that in that case the name of your intended successor would not transpire long before your departure. Whether this would be any annoyance to you, you must judge.

But even this arrangement, if it could be made, would not relieve me from the necessity of pressing upon your consideration the point which I submitted to you in my last letter—I mean that of the Embassy to Vienna. *It*, the Embassy, might remain for some months open, but the vacancy which is to be filled in order to vacate Vienna cannot be kept open without exposing both the Government in India, and the King's Government here, to the most serious inconvenience. The leading individuals of the Court of Directors press every day for a nomination. There would (as I have already told you) be no reason for preparing Sir Henry Wellesley unless you were disposed to take his place at Vienna. *Otherwise*, any change in the Embassy would be at present undesirable; and India could not be thrown away on a mere

act of favour, being the only reasons in my hands either for effecting an opening or for gratifying individual pretensions. My fear is that, unless I can give the Court of Directors a distinct recommendation next week, private intrigue will go to work successfully, and we shall then have a conflict between the two authorities. As yet the East India Company are perfectly tractable and acquiescent.

Something was said to me by one of your friends of the expediency of opening the Embassy at the Hague rather than that of Vienna, as affording comparatively greater means of an economical establishment. This is perfectly true, and I would willingly have turned my views that way, but for these circumstances. The Embassy at the Hague is known to be what it is, distinctly overpaid—the only one of our Embassies that is so. We are on the eve of a session of retrenchments. If there is no change in that Embassy, it may not attract notice ; but a change, and so conspicuous a one, would infallibly attract public attention to it ; and I could not bear that your name should be mixed in discussions of such a nature. But further, the Hereditary Prince of Orange has taken up a course of behaviour towards the *Corps Diplomatique* at Brussels which has led to much discussion, and may lead to remonstrance, and possibly to the change of the character of our Mission, as the King of the Netherlands (though no party to the misconduct of his son—whom, however, he cannot control) is, and has been for the last three years, desirous of getting

rid of the burden of the Embassy. In former times, it is true, we maintained an Ambassador at the Hague, though there was no Dutch Embassy here. But we then were Viceroys in Holland. We have now little to do with the external politics, and nothing with the internal concern of the Netherlands, and I think it would be quite impossible to maintain an Embassy in those countries in exchange for a mission here—when we had no peculiarities of political influence, or even of distinguishingly kind reception, to plead for it.

There is also this to be said, even in point of economy, for the successor to Vienna—that you would find your brother's house and establishment there fixed at a rate, probably of not ruinous extravagance, and yet such as there could be no necessity to increase.

I ought, perhaps, to ask your pardon for entering into these details; but I know not how else to explain satisfactorily all the motives of my offer.

In the same spirit, and from the same motives, Shawe will perhaps have told you that I had been making provision for the possible chance of your wishing to remain at home, by proposing for you one of the pensions, under the Act of Parliament, of £3,000, to which as Secretary of State for two years' service you would be entitled. The warrant was actually drawn—when I found that by the Act of Parliament itself such pension is not tenable with the sinecure office which you hold in Ireland —a circumstance which had entirely slipped my memory.

I say nothing more about honours, because I

consider Colonel Shawe's letter, written by your direction, as entirely conclusive upon that head.

I have not *seen* Lady Wellesley, and I must explain to you why I have not done so. It is because, without doing any good, our interview would only place us both in an embarrassing situation. Any suggestion which she may have to make to me I could equally learn through others—through Shawe while he was here, since through Lord Plunket. But Lady Wellesley sees the Duke of Wellington (as it is natural that she should do) almost daily. If we (Lady Wellesley and I) meet, am I to stipulate that what passes between us is *not* to go to the Duke?—or am I to discuss matters with Lady Wellesley at the risk of their being communicated to the Duke in his present temper of bitter political hostility?

This is the alternative, and I do not know which is more to be avoided—the inconvenience of such a confidence or the unseemliness of such a stipulation.

I have now, I think, touched upon every topic which your letter either contains or suggests, except what relates to His Majesty's feelings towards you. I am confident that they are feelings of unabated kindness—though I am not *quite* sure that there are not some trifling matters (the amount and nature of which I hardly know) in which you may inadvertently have fallen into some negligence towards His Majesty.

But I state this only that I may conscientiously state the whole and exact truth, so far as I know

it. I am quite sure that these smaller feelings do not interfere with His Majesty's general and long-established sentiments of regard. As to your return from Ireland—it never entered into His Majesty's head that it was a *recall*, or any other than the natural and expected termination of your functions. I daresay that if a comparison of your stay with that of the Duke of Richmond (the longest lived of your predecessors, I believe, in modern times) had occurred to His Majesty, he would have taken that consideration into account.

I must conclude, as I set out with requesting you to give me light enough to guide me in my movements about India. That is the point that presses in respect to time.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* GEORGE CANNING

Private and confidential *Phoenix Park*
June 11, 1827

I received your kind letter by the messenger Dawes, and now answer that part of it which relates to the Embassy to Vienna. I was very anxious to send you an answer immediately, but the proposition involved so many considerations that I could not in justice to myself, to you, or to others, make any hasty determination. I trust this letter will arrive in time to save you from any trouble at the India House.

I am fully sensible of the kind motives which have dictated your conduct as well in this proposition as in that which related to India, and

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 345.

which I declined, with every acknowledgment for the offer. I must pursue the same course on this occasion. It would occupy too much of your valuable time to enter into the reasons which preclude my acceptance of the Embassy to Vienna at present. I hope I need not say that they are totally unconnected with any other feelings than those of perfect cordiality and friendship. I have always felt and expressed a most cordial desire to serve in your confidence and under your directions, but I should prefer that service either here or in England, at least for the present.

I feel most deeply your kindness to my brother Henry, who is truly worthy of every favour. I hope that my conduct in this matter may not prove injurious to him. He is perfectly qualified for the office of Governor-General of India, but I am aware that his views now are out of the question.

I justly appreciate the friendly solicitude for my personal interests which pervades your whole letter, and I am greatly obliged to you for the frankness and delicacy with which you have combined some of your obliging suggestions. In the same spirit you will be glad to learn from me that some circumstances relating to my situation have been exaggerated, and that at the close of my government here I shall be quite ready to accept any office under your government in England.

I hope to be able to answer your letter fully to-morrow night, but I would not delay this communication.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 351.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* GEORGE CANNING

Private and confidential *Phoenix Park*
June 13, 1827

Having answered your kind letter of the 7th as far as relates to Vienna, I now proceed to the remaining suggestions. My intention always was to remain in Ireland until January next; beyond that term (about, but not quite as long as that of the Duke of Richmond), of course it must have depended on the King's Government to prolong my services here. I never made that point an object, nor intended to solicit it. Probably I should not have wished it. *Now* I certainly do *not* wish it. But it is of the highest importance both to my interests and honour to remain here until January next. To remove me before that period of time (whatever may be the motive) would bear all the appearance of a recall, and would expose me to great inconvenience. The public service also would be much injured by such a course.

It is unfortunate that I had not a free communication with you long ago on this and other matters. I am not at all anxious that the name of my intended successor should not transpire, provided he be not named in Council until the time of my departure shall approach.

What I would propose on the whole subject would shortly be:

That you should understand this letter to be an intimation of my wish to be relieved from this charge in January next.

That you should (if you please) designate my

successor, but not appoint him in Council until the month of December.

That I should publicly signify my intention (with His Majesty's permission) to resign this charge at the time specified, and that I should have leave to appoint Lords Justices (the Primate, Lord Chancellor, and Sir George Murray), so as to be able to move before the arrival of my successor.

I should hope this plan would not be disapproved. It appears to me to be reasonable and just, and it would be quite satisfactory to me.

As this matter may press upon you in the present moment, I have made it the subject of a separate letter and thus early communication.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE KING

Phoenix Park: June 28, 1827

SIR,

Your Majesty having most graciously condescended to permit me to address directly to Your Majesty's indulgent consideration any representations affecting the great and arduous trust which your Royal grace and favour have confided to my hands, I rely on that benignant heart, so propitious to me, for a kind and just construction of this letter.

My intention has been formed, under a sense of duty towards Your Majesty, not to relinquish this charge, except by Your Majesty's special command, until the month of January 1828.

Many important internal regulations, com-

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 356.

menced under my superintendence, remain to be completed before the next session of Parliament, and many useful reductions of expense may be effected in Ireland within the course of this year. It would be equally advantageous to my interests and honour, to Your Majesty's service, and to the welfare of Ireland, that I should superintend these affairs to their conclusion.

In the month of January next I shall be prepared to receive Your Majesty's commands for relieving me from this government, if it shall be Your Majesty's pleasure to signify them to me; and in that case I would humbly request Your Majesty's permission to name Lords Justices in the usual manner, some time before my departure. The Lords Justices are usually the Primate, the Lord Chancellor, and the Commander of the Forces in Ireland. In submitting these humble suggestions to Your Majesty, I trust I shall not be supposed to intimate any inclination to withdraw from Your Majesty's service in Ireland one moment before it may be vouchsafed to me in this life. But it is not my present wish to be employed in any foreign station.

Your Majesty, I am persuaded, would deem any new expression of my zeal, attachment, and gratitude superfluous in your sight; these sentiments have been fixed in my heart from the earliest dawn of my reason; they have been manifested towards Your Majesty, without abatement, from the moment of my first introduction to Your Royal Person, and they can never be abated while my existence in this world shall continue.

With the warmest devotion, and the most dutiful veneration, I have the honour to be, Sir,
Your Majesty's faithful and obedient servant,
WELLESLEY.[1]

GEORGE CANNING *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY
Downing Street: July 12, 1827

I transmit to you, by the King's command, His Majesty's answer to your letter; and I am further commanded by His Majesty to enter into some explanation with you upon points of detail connected with the duration of your Viceroyalty, into which His Majesty has not entered in his own letter.

His Majesty willingly consents that your successor should not take possession of the government of Ireland till the beginning of January, and that you should have the grace of originating your resignation for that period. His Majesty, likewise, consents to your coming away at any time that you may think proper, before the cessation of your term in the Government, appointing Lords Justices for the interval between your departure and the arrival of your successor. But His Majesty particularly desires that that arrival should not be delayed beyond the period which has been specified—the very beginning of January; that the beginning of January should be the *completion*, not the *outset* of the whole transaction, and that the announcement of your resignation for that period should be made as soon as may be. You know the difficulty of keeping

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 362.

official secrets here, and are probably not surprised, therefore, that conjectures are already afloat respecting the selection of your successor. It would be idle to make any mystery with you as to the fact that these conjectures are well founded, and that Lord Anglesey is the man. But it is a considerable awkwardness to the Government, and personally to His Majesty (on account of communications which His Majesty has had with different persons on the subject of Ireland), not to be at liberty to speak precisely on this point—which can only be done *after* your intention to resign shall have been announced.

You will consider this letter only as supplemental to that of His Majesty.[1]

[Enclosure]

Royal Lodge, Windsor: July 10, 1827

The King sends his kind regards to Lord Wellesley.

The King receives with feelings of great pleasure and satisfaction the expression of Lord Wellesley's affectionate attachment and dutiful devotion towards the King's Person.

Now that the King knows what Lord Wellesley's wishes really are, the King will endeavour (as far as it may be practicable) to meet them; but the perplexing embarrassments to which the King has been exposed by the unaccountable conduct of the individuals forming a part of the late Cabinet, render it very difficult for the King to accede to Lord Wellesley's proposal respecting Ireland.

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 364.

The King desires, however, distinctly to state that this does not arise from any indisposition towards Lord Wellesley, but from the force of circumstances. But relative to this point Lord Wellesley will hear from his kind and warm friend, Mr. Canning.

The King will only add that Lord Wellesley may rest assured the King enters with the kindest feeling into every thing connected with Lord Wellesley's peace, comfort, and future happiness.

The King desires that Lord Wellesley will make the King's kind remembrances acceptable to Lady Wellesley.

G. R.[1]

Augustus Granville Stapleton[2] *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Chiswick : August 5, 1827

Though the bulletins which have been published, and which will reach your Excellency at the same time with this letter, will inform you of the very alarming, I fear I must say hopeless,

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 366.

[2] Augustus Granville Stapleton (1800-1880), although entered in the register of Rugby School as son of John Stapleton, of Barnstaple, is generally supposed to have been a natural son of Canning's friend, the first Lord Morley. When he came down from Cambridge he was appointed by Canning his private secretary. At the instigation of George IV. he was, immediately after Canning's death, made a Commissioner of Customs, which office he resigned after a few years. He wrote a *Political Life of Canning*, which he printed in 1830, but Wellington opposed the publication. In the same year, however, pamphlets attacking Canning appeared, and, as a reply to those, Stapleton issued his biography in 1831. His *George Canning and his Times* appeared in 1859.

state of our dear friend, Mr. Canning, yet respect for those warm feelings of attachment which I know that he entertained for you, and which I know that you returned, will not allow me to leave you without more circumstantial accounts than those which can be conveyed through the medium of a bulletin.

Mr. Canning, though not well, yet went to the King at the Lodge on Monday, and on Tuesday went to the office in Downing Street, where he saw a physician who recommended a blister. On Wednesday he applied the blister, and on Thursday he was so uncomfortable in the morning that a consultation of physicians took place in the evening. On Friday morning he was alarmingly worse, and the danger has gone on gradually increasing, till, at the moment when I am writing, I dread to say that it is quite a hopeless case.

I will not trouble your Excellency with my feelings of affliction. I am sure that you will feel most deeply the painful intelligence which I now convey to you.

P.S. 5 p.m. I open my letter to say that there *is* an improvement, and consequently a hope.[1]

Augustus Granville Stapleton *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Chiswick: August 7, 1827

You will see by the bulletin of this morning at eight the opinion of the physicians.

Since that hour Mr. Canning has rallied in a wonderful way, but not, I fear, in a way to enable

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 261.

me to induce your Excellency to build any more favourable hopes of a happy result.[1]

LORD LANSDOWNE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Secret and confidential *Home Office*
August 8, 1827

I feel it a duty to acquaint your Excellency with the melancholy event of this morning. Mr. Canning expired between three and four o'clock.

I am just returned from Windsor, where it was my province to convey this calamitous intelligence to His Majesty, who appeared much affected by it, however prepared by the medical reports of the last two days.

I am happy to add that His Majesty is otherwise in excellent health.[2]

AUGUSTUS GRANVILLE STAPLETON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: August 10, 1827

Since the fatal event which has deprived us of so invaluable a friend, and the country of so great a Minister, I have been unable to attend to more than those most painful duties of affectionate respect for his memory which the dreadful occasion rendered necessary, and from having done which, however distressing, I shall always derive a melancholy satisfaction.

This must plead my apology to your Excellency for leaving you to learn from the newspapers the first tidings of the death of Mr. Canning.

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 263.
[2] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 368.

GEORGE CANNING
From a drawing dated 1824

He died without a struggle, having been insensible for about two hours and a half before he died. It was a long time before Mrs. Canning could be brought to believe the dreadful calamity which had befallen her. On the morning of the next day, however, consciousness returned, and to-day I learn, with much pleasure, that she is better, and more composed. Lady Clanricarde[1] is as well as can be expected. Nothing could surpass the good feeling, the good sense, and kindness of Lord Clanricarde, whose unceasing attention to Mr. Canning's wants and comforts during his illness evidently gave Mr. Canning the greatest pleasure.

I will not fail, as soon as the first agony of grief is over, to communicate your message to his family. When that time is gone by, these testimonies of love and affection from the great and good for the dear object of their love will be to them one of the best and most gratifying sources of consolation.[2]

Memorandum by THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

August 11, 1827

If the office of First Lord of the Treasury should be proposed to Lord Wellesley he would accept it, and would proceed to England with all practicable expedition.

In this case early permission should be given to him to appoint Lords Justices: the First

[1] Canning's daughter, Harriet, had married Ulick John, first Marquess of Clanricarde.

[2] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 264.

Commissioner of the Great Seal, Chief Justice Bushe, the Primate, Beresford, and Sir George Murray Commander of the Forces.

The period at which the new Lord-Lieutenant might succeed Lord Wellesley could be fixed when Lord Wellesley arrived in England.

If the Foreign Office should be proposed to Lord Wellesley he would accept, and similar arrangements might be made.

If the office of President of the Council should be offered, his Lordship would not refuse it; but in that case he would not wish to vacate the office of Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland until the month of January, unless particularly desired to do so sooner.

He does not think it necessary to mention any other office as likely to be proposed to him, or that he would accept.

Lord Wellesley would not object to serve under Lord Lansdowne or Lord Goderich or the Duke of Wellington or Mr. Peel, or any other person approved by the King, for the head of a Government formed upon such principles as Lord Wellesley could approve, especially the principles of Lord Liverpool's Government.

It is Lord Wellesley's intention to take an active and decided part in Parliament and in public upon his return to England, whether in office or not.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* COLONEL SHAWE

Phoenix Park: August 14, 1827

Some time since Mr. Blake informed me of

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 371.

Mr. Wynn's kind intention towards me with reference to the long neglect of my public services in India, and to the inadequate reward which had been conferred on me by the Company. Having never solicited Mr. Wynn, nor indeed any person on that question, I was more deeply impressed with Mr. Wynn's generous and voluntary friendship, for which I shall feel the warmest sense of gratitude through life. At Mr. Blake's desire I entrust him with a series of documents proving the injustice offered to me by the grant of 1799-1800, which was substituted in place of the reward originally offered to me. Mr. Blake has forwarded these papers to Mr. Wynn, but it may be useful also to present to him another set of them, and, accordingly, I sent you a packet last night which I request you to submit to Mr. Wynn. You can fully explain the whole case to him, and you can compare the rewards given to Lord Cornwallis and Lord Hastings with that which I have received. It is to be observed that I have received no reward whatever for the great Marátha war, by much the greatest service ever achieved in India, and of which the public opinion is now clear with regard to every principle of justice, policy, and beneficial result. The Company has fully enjoyed every advantage obtained by that war and by the general course of my government, and has left me not only unrewarded but unnoticed. It would now be a positive insult to grant additional rewards and honourable distinctions to Lord Hastings and family without any symptom of just consideration for me. It may

be observed that the persecution which I endured for several years was not discountenanced if it was not encouraged by the Court of Directors, and you can inform Mr. Wynn of the heavy expense which was brought upon me by that persecution. Yet even under such sufferings I have always been an active friend to the Company. In addition to every other consideration it would be a great public object to me to be reconciled to my old masters, towards whom I always feel the same spirit which actuated me through the whole course of my conduct in their service. Such a reconciliation would be equally honourable to both parties, and must reflect credit on the characters of the Company.[1]

After Canning's death, Wellesley, much to his disappointment, was not sent for to form an administration, and Goderich, who under Canning had been Secretary for War, Commissioner for Indian affairs, and leader of the House of Lords, became Prime Minister. Wellesley remained at his post in Ireland.

M. G. PRENDERGAST *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Brooks's Club House: December 20, 1827

I feel greatly embarrassed how to make such conflicting reports to your Excellency as must constitute the subjects of this hastily written note, but being restricted from making the following communication to any human being, save your

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 268.

Excellency, by a most honourable and respectable person, firmly attached to your interests, I have neither choice nor discretion to exercise.

My friend asserts positively that Mr. Huskisson is and has been for several days the sole cause of your Excellency's not having been summoned by the King. He asserts that Huskisson has been intriguing during the last five or six weeks to work himself into the Premiership—knowing that Lord Goderich meant to resign before the meeting of Parliament; but finding neither the King nor the aristocracy of the country would stand it, he has suddenly veered round and has not only prevailed on Lord Goderich to remain (" damaged as he is ") in office, but he has reconciled all the Cabinet to this flimsy arrangement. The fact is, he feels that he has Lord Goderich and Lord Dudley completely *in his pocket*, and that under this arrangement he will possess the complete control and direction of the Government.

Aware that such would not be his situation if your Excellency were placed at the head of the Government, he has in the most decided manner opposed not only the will of his Sovereign, but the active and zealous exertions of your old *protégé*, Sir William Knighton,[1] which, my friend says, " he will live to repent." He positively declared that he would resign his office and throw up the Leadership of the Commons if your Excellency were called to the head of the Government, and

[1] Sir William Knighton, first Baronet (1776-1836), was physician to George IV. when Prince of Wales, and afterwards, when he became King, was also his confidential adviser and man of business, being officially Keeper of the Privy Purse.

on this point my friend remarked: "The dread of being resisted by such a mind as Lord Wellesley's will always influence Huskisson to oppose his appointment to any office that may militate with his monopolising views of power. He will not oppose his getting the Privy Seal or the Presidency of the Council," and the foregoing is the substance of the communication I was enjoined to make exclusively to your Excellency—and I beg leave to submit that in the course of conversation with my excellent friend Henry Ellis (Lady Goderich's brother), I find the substance of my friend's communication completely confirmed. He says there is no doubt but Huskisson has been intriguing for the Premiership, and as little that he opposes your Excellency's being raised to that station. On Thursday, 12th, Lord Goderich was commissioned to present a Cabinet note to the King signed by Lords Goderich and Lansdowne and Mr. Huskisson, submitting the necessity for immediately strengthening the Government, and expressing as the wish of the Cabinet that Lords Wellesley and Holland should be invited to join or have Cabinet seats. It is a very curious fact that Lord Goderich delivered in writing his resignation at the foot of this Cabinet note and was ordered to wait on His Majesty at eleven o'clock the next morning, when he was pleased to accept it in a formal manner, accompanied, however, by some expressions of concern at his having found it necessary to withdraw from his service. Lord Goderich left town the following day at twelve o'clock to avoid the enquiries of his

colleagues and friends, and the King sent a messenger for Lord Harrowby,[1] who, it was well known, would positively refuse the Premiership. He came up from Staffordshire on Sunday night and waited on the King the next, accompanied (I believe) by Mr. Huskisson ; but on that morning a letter came from Lord Goderich saying that if the step he took in tendering his resignation was considered likely to break up or materially to embarrass the Government he was prepared at any risk of health or inconvenience to remain in office. This proposition was just what Mr. Huskisson wished. There was an immediate answer despatched, stating that his sacrifice of his own feelings and comfort was most gratefully felt and acknowledged, and imploring him to hasten his return to town. He accordingly came to town on Tuesday evening (a day sooner than he intended), and a Cabinet was called for the next day, at which some knotty points were discussed, as I am informed. Stratford Canning's despatch of the 24th ult. holds out no prospect of adjustment with the Sultan, and he expected that his next despatch would be dated from on board ship. This news has excited serious discomfiture. The subject of strengthening the Government was, I am told, brought forward in as far as related to Lord Holland, and the result, I believe, was a determination not to force upon His Majesty a measure which it was known he was opposed to. The real cause of the decision against Lord Holland was the

[1] *See* Dudley Ryder, vol. i. p. 90, note. He had retired from office on the death of Canning.

determination taken by the Chancellor of the Exchequer to resign if another Whig, and particularly Lord Holland, were brought into the Cabinet. All that occurred at yesterday's Cabinet is more the conjecture of my friend than any positive knowledge he had obtained when I saw him. Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Huskisson went to Holland House when the Cabinet broke up at half-past six o'clock, and my friend argues that if it had not been decided to keep him out there would not have been a necessity to pay that visit. Lord Goderich is gone down to the Cottage to kiss hands and be forgiven.[1]

The result of Wellesley's seven years' administration of Ireland has been admirably summed up by his earliest biographer: "Economy in the public expenditure—a removal of various obnoxious and oppressive imports—a remission of the Union duties, which acted prejudicially against the commerce of Ireland—an enquiry into the state of education—the purification of the magistracy—the establishment of Petty Sessions—the appointment of Assistant Barristers [for the administration of justice]—a more impartial administration of justice, in consequence of the judicious selection of men to fill the vacancies on the judicial bench—the organisation of an efficient police force—the effectual suppression of 'Whiteboy' offences—the extinction of secret

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 373.

and illegal societies—the mitigation of the severity of the Tithe Law—the extension of public works—and the diffusion of sentiments of moderation, kindliness, and public spirit among all classes. These were some of the fruits of his government."[1]

[1] Pearce: *Wellesley*, iii. 394.

BOOK IX

LAST YEARS OF OFFICIAL LIFE
1828-1835

BOOK IX

LAST YEARS OF OFFICIAL LIFE 1828-1835

Goderich resigns: Wellington becomes Prime Minister: He does not offer any post to Wellesley : They cross swords over the Catholic Emancipation Bill : Wellington resigns and is succeeded by Grey : Wellesley accepts the office of Lord Steward of the Household : The state of Ireland : The choice of a King for Belgium : Wellesley offers his services for a diplomatic mission to Spain : He is appointed Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland : Grenville on Wellesley : Irish affairs : A breach in the Ministry : Lord Brougham : Irish Coercion Bill : Irish Tithes Bill : Death of Lord Spencer : Melbourne resigns : Wellington proposes Peel to the King : Peel accepts office : Wellesley retires with the Melbourne Ministry : Melbourne again Prime Minister : Wellesley Lord Chamberlain : He resigns soon after accepting the office : Reasons for his resignation : A paragraph in a leader in *The Times* causes much trouble.

GODERICH resigned again in January 1828, and this time his resignation was accepted. The King sent for the Duke of Wellington, who undertook to form an administration. Wellesley, whose term of office in Ireland had run out, came to England. There is no question but that he expected from his brother the offer of an important part in the new Ministry.

REV. HENRY WELLESLEY *to* LADY WELLESLEY

[*January* 5, 1828]

I am very anxious to know whether my father's cold is better to-day, as I heard with sincere regret from you yesterday that he was confined by it to his bed. I was well enough to call at your house yesterday, but did not feel quite equal to a visit, and I am certain that you will ascribe it to the real cause.

I believe that the Cabinet is not yet arranged, and even if it is, I should not resign the hope of seeing my father's name in it at an early period, as the first arrangement will most probably not be permanent.

I hope and trust that the Duke has not only remembered my father's claims, but has pressed them strongly on his colleagues and on the King. This would be but an act of justice, and of sound policy as regards *his own character*. For all the world will with one voice condemn his conduct if he neglects this proof of respect and of attachment to his brother. There is a very general wish that my father should be in the Ministry, and the Duke must be aware of this fact. We shall, I assure you, feel the sincerest pain if my father is not placed in the Cabinet, as himself may desire, and as his services and character justify us in expecting.[1]

Wellington, however, did not offer his brother any part in the new Ministry. The Duke was pledged to Protestant ascendancy, the Marquess to

[1] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 3.

Catholic emancipation, and in the House of Lords on June 10 they had a passage of arms in the debate on the question. In the end, however, the Prime Minister had to give way, and on April 13, 1829, the Catholic Emancipation Bill became law.

RICHARD WELLESLEY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Brighton: June 13, 1828

MY DEAR FATHER,

It is with sincere pleasure that I have read the report of your speech on the Catholic question, and with still greater satisfaction that I have heard from many quarters the general impression which it has made in the country. Your testimony was at this season of more than common value to the *cause* itself; but that value was much increased by the clear and forcible manner in which your confirmed opinions were expressed. I cordially hope that this may be only the prelude to many exertions in the House of Lords during the present session.

With this *public* proof of your health, it is needless to trouble you with enquiries about it, more especially as I hope in a few days to have the pleasure of seeing you in London. Having found my health and general strength improved gradually at this place, I have persevered in residing here; and the climate has, with very little aid of medicine, so much restored me that I intend for the next three or four months to attend my duty at the Stamp Office.

I regret having been so long an absentee from it, though not a voluntary one, for I can assure you that, however contrary to the habits and feelings of my earlier life, the very subsistence of my family obliges me to adhere to it.

Your affectionate son,

R. WELLESLEY.[1]

Finding himself on November 15, 1830, in a minority in the House of Commons on Sir H. Parnell's motion with regard to the Civil List, Wellington resigned, and Earl Grey became Prime Minister. "Lord Wellesley," Croker wrote to Lord Hertford, November 18, "is to get something—some say Lord Chamberlain, others the Board of Control; but I don't think they will give any office of business to the most *brilliant incapacity* in England." The office offered to, and accepted by, Wellesley was that of Lord Steward of the Household.

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Hill Street: [1830]

Allow me to express (which I do very heartily) the extreme gratification which I feel in the prospect of belonging to a Government in which you are to hold a high station. I believe it to be a general feeling that the advantage would have been great of your being in the Cabinet.

But you have chosen otherwise; and at all events and in all cases we shall have access to the

[1] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 7.

Hamilton, pinxt. *J. Heath, sculpt.*

WILLIAM CONYNGHAM, 1ST BARON PLUNKET

opes consili which our connection with so renowned a statesman places within reach.[1]

LORD PLUNKET *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Old Connaught: January 8, 1831

I ought not to have left your very kind letter of the 8th of December so long unanswered. During part of the time I was not fully assured of my appointment [as Lord Chancellor of Ireland], and since that I have been incessantly occupied.

We certainly are not at present here in an enviable state of repose. The fallibility of the poor Irish is deplorable. My confidence is in the absence of all real grievance, and I trust the present agitation will soon subside. Lord Anglesey acts with firmness and promptitude and temper. I often wish we could have the opportunity of drawing on the wisdom and comprehensive views of a friend of ours who, I firmly believe, possesses more resources applicable to the extraordinary crisis in which the Empire is placed than any man in or out of office. Remember me to him with respect and attention.

All my people, young and old, male and female, send you their warm regards.[2]

The first and most pressing matter to which the new Government had to turn its attention was Parliamentary reform. Although defeated on the matter of the Civil List, Wellington's Government had really fallen on this subject.

[1] Add. MSS. 37310 f. 365.
[2] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 1.

Wellesley had for some time been convinced of the necessity for reform, and gave his warm support to the measure introduced by Earl Grey.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: March 4, 1831

I have been much gratified by your Lordship's complete and cordial approbation of our plan of reform; the necessity of reform being admitted, to have proposed anything that would have been inefficient would have been the height of folly. The opposition in Parliament would not have been less from those who now resist the measure, and would have been assisted by the disappointment and dissatisfaction of the public. The public is now completely with us, and the first effect of what we have done has been to set aside, at once, all the clamour for universal suffrage, annual Parliament, and ballot. If interest and prejudice were not too strong to let them see the advantages which might be derived from even a temporary state of contentment and satisfaction, what advantages might we not look to from the adoption of this measure?

The King continues to act most steadily and honourably, and I receive continued assurances of his full confidence and approbation. With the King and the people it will be a strange and still more lamentable event, if a measure so supported is defeated by the supporters of decayed boroughs in the House of Commons. But according to present appearances we shall not incur this disgrace, and the more public opinion is declared,

the more reason there is to expect that its influence in both Houses will ultimately prevail.[1]

It is unnecessary to give here a detailed account of the progress of the Reform Bills through the Houses of Parliament, but it is interesting to note that when the King refused to give the Royal assent in person, the commission appointed for the purpose included Wellesley, along with Earl Grey, Lord Brougham, the Marquess of Lansdowne, Lord Durham, and Lord Holland. Wellesley apparently took no part in the debates, for on June 11 Lord Durham wrote to him: "Why do you, who view everything so justly, and have greater powers of enforcing your views by reasoning than almost anyone, never take a part now in the debate? It is a great loss to the country and to the Liberal cause." In May Wellesley resigned the Lord Stewardship.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Downing Street: April 15, 1831

I have been prevented from answering your very kind letter of the 13th as immediately as I wished.

It gave me great pleasure to hear that your health was so far re-established as to afford the hope of your being soon able to appear in your place in the House of Lords. We shall be in great want of your assistance there, upon many of the matters that will soon come under discussion; and I look forward with anxious hope to the effect

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 6.

of a powerful speech from you on the question of reform.

Indeed, there are many questions on which I should wish to have the benefit of your opinion and advice, if our opportunities of intercourse were more easy—more especially with respect to Ireland, the situation of which country becomes daily more afflicting. We are much pressed to renew the Insurrection Act. We have hitherto resisted these applications, but I fear that the moment is fast approaching when we shall no longer be able to avoid having recourse to this or to some similar measure.

The question of reform is going on, I think, with a fair prospect of success, and the increasing violence of its opponents is no bad indication of their fears of its passing. There is no species of misrepresentation to which they are ashamed to resort. Their last attempt to propagate a belief that we were willing to compromise the efficiency of the measure has been, I trust, completely defeated. I am confirmed in my belief that all their future efforts, like all that have been already used, will fail in deluding the good sense or exciting the mass of the public to any degree that may be favourable to their views. The Duke of Cumberland's conduct in circulating the scandalous libel, which you were so good as to send me, is of a piece with all the rest. He has been reconciled lately to the Duke of Wellington, and they have been seen, more than once, in sweet and harmonious conversation on the same bench in the House of Lords.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 11.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *East Sheen: July* 26, 1832

I have just received your Lordship's note, and am very sorry to learn that you have been suffering so much from indisposition. I am not surprised that what passed on the second reading of the Irish Bill should have produced the remarks which you make upon it. They are most just as applied to both the speeches. The one was detestable in principle, and pitiable in expression. The other was excellent in all ways.

They have made a great muster to carry some point to-day in the committee, and we shall be in the utmost want of every vote we can procure. I am unwilling to urge anything that might be inconvenient to you, or injurious to your health. But if you can come, even to pair off, I shall be much obliged to you. You know proxies are not available in the committee.

I came here to dinner yesterday after the *levée*, and am just returning to town, with more reluctance than I ever did to Eton after the holidays. The Duke of Cumberland, who is more violent and bitter than ever, talks loudly of what they are to do to-night.[1]

The selection of a king for the newly-formed kingdom of Belgium was the cause of much trouble to the chancelleries of Europe. All sorts of suggestions were made. Auguste Beauharnais, Duke of Leuchtenberg, the grandson of Napoleon's

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 54.

first consort, was proposed, but he was objected to by Louis Philippe, who naturally enough did not like the idea of a Buonaparte reigning so near France. Then Louis Philippe's second son, the Duke of Nemours, was put forward, and actually elected on February 3, 1831, by the Belgian National Congress ; but he was ineligible by virtue of the Conference of London, which decreed that members of the reigning dynasty of the great Powers should be excluded. Finally, it was offered to, and, after much negotiation, accepted by Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg. The Portuguese trouble had more serious results, and resulted in a war between Peter and Miguel in which Great Britain, Spain, and France were later involved.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Howick : September* 15, 1832

I have had the pleasure of receiving your Lordship's letter of the 12th.

My correspondence with Windsor Castle entirely confirmed the account you give of the good disposition that appears to prevail there. I cannot doubt, however, that there exists in some quarters a spirit which nothing will ever conciliate.

All our prospects seem at present to be good : the revenue increasing, the internal state of the country much improved, even Ireland comparatively tranquil, and everything so far promising success to the resolution of the Government to enforce the authority of the law. Abroad we

have still the difficulties of Belgium and Portugal. The former might be easily settled if all the members of the Conference were animated with one will; and so would the latter if all the qualities required in such an enterprise as that in which Don Pedro is engaged were not wanting.

You may be assured of my sincere disposition and desire to do anything in my power to meet your Lordship's wishes; and I will immediately make the necessary enquiries respecting Mr. Greville's office. But I believe it will be subject to new regulations in the department, and connected with other arrangements which may become necessary. I will enquire, however, but nothing, probably, can be definitely settled respecting it before my return to town, early in the next month.[1]

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Stanhope Street: December 2, 1832*

I am very much obliged to you for so early a communication. The period within which you think that you could be prepared to set out upon the important mission which we conversed about yesterday, is indeed as short as one could have expected you to name. Whether in the opinion of the Government the urgency of affairs would admit even of that short delay, I cannot take upon myself to say, but I will immediately send your note to Lord Grey, who is at Sheen. I need not, I am sure, say how much the Government,

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 56.

and I in particular as more directly concerned in the matter by my office, appreciate the very handsome manner in which you have offered your valuable services to the public upon this important occasion ; and what an advantage we should think it to be able to bring the weight of so powerful a representative of Great Britain to bear upon the great questions which are now pending in the Peninsula.[1]

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *East Sheen : December* 4, 1832

I received your Lordship's very kind note, with the enclosed memorandum, this morning, but was unable to answer it immediately.

I am afraid the immediate object of the mission to Spain would not admit of so long a delay as a fortnight. It is probable, therefore, that the original intention of sending Sir Stratford Canning may be carried into effect.

But as his appointment to St. Petersburg will only allow of his staying a short time at Madrid, and as there will be much to be done, if things go well, to settle the affairs of Spain and Portugal, in their relations with this country, upon a satisfactory and permanent foundation, I see no means by which that important object may be so well effected as by your Lordship's going, if it should be agreeable to you, to take up and finish the work which may have been begun by Sir Stratford Canning. The footing upon which this might be arranged, as it appears to me, would be

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 380.

still that of a temporary mission, but for an undefined period. The character of the mission, and the period at which you should set out, which, however, should be early, would be best settled, if this proposal should appear to your Lordship to deserve consideration, by a personal communication with Lord Palmerston or with me, as may be most convenient to your Lordship.[1]

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Stanhope Street: December* 6, 1832

The Government are of opinion that if anything can be effected at Madrid upon the subject of Portuguese affairs, our only chance of doing any good is by an immediate communication; for the condition of Don Pedro with respect to his financial means has become so critical that help postponed would come too late. Under these circumstances, and considering that on the one hand it would be impossible to expect that you could set out upon such a mission without a certain time for preliminary arrangements, and that, upon the other, Sir Stratford Canning has, upon notice given him ten days ago, prepared himself to start as soon as his instructions are given him, the Government are of opinion that it will be advisable to send Sir Stratford without delay to open the treaties. But Sir Stratford will not be able to remain long at Madrid, as his duties lie elsewhere, and the Government would wish very much to know whether, if this Portuguese question should be

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 63.

more difficult and tedious of adjustment than we imagine, and should require a weightier hand, or if the affairs of Spain should take a turn which afforded an opening for the suggestion of large views by the representative of a friendly power, you would in either of those events feel disposed to give us the temporary aid of your important services at Madrid in the course, perhaps, of a couple of months from this time.[1]

Sir William Henry Fremantle[2] *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Private and confidential — *Stanhope Street*
April 18, 1833

I am commanded by the King to express His Majesty's extreme satisfaction at the attention your Lordship has shown to his wishes on the subject of the proposed dinner to the Directors of the East India Company, and at the very judicious and proper consideration you have given to the question of issuing the cards of invitation. The information contained in your note to me of yesterday, which I laid before the King, has relieved His Majesty from all difficulty. He has not, however, thought proper to issue his commands finally upon it, but I will take care that Mr. Marrable should immediately inform your Lordship when the day shall be fixed.

His Majesty regrets that your Lordship is still confined, but hopes the weather and the improve-

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 383.
[2] Treasurer of the Household, 1826-1837.

ment of your health will enable you to fulfil your intentions of attending the dinner of the Knights of the Garter.[1]

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Downing Street: June* 4, 1833

I regretted your absence last night very much,[2] but still more the causes of it, and I shall be anxious to hear that you have got rid of this very troublesome complaint. Our defeat last night was in some degree a surprise; but if we had been better prepared the result would not have been materially different. It is quite clear that this was a deliberate plan to strike a decisive blow against the Government. They must then be supposed to have been prepared with a new administration. Yet how it was to be formed, or how it could be expected to stand, it is not easy to conceive. Already the House of Commons are beginning to stir, and I am afraid that there is only one result of all this that is quite certain, *viz.*, the further loss of influence and character by the House of Lords. The Bishops, above all, will have reason to rue the vote of last night.

I am to go to Windsor early to-morrow, to submit to His Majesty the very grave

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 73.

[2] In the House of Lords on June 3 Wellington moved, "That an humble Address be presented to His Majesty, to entreat him that he would be graciously pleased to give such directions as are necessary to enforce the observance of his subjects of His Majesty's declared neutrality in the contest now going on in Portugal." Lord Grey opposed the motion, but it was carried against the Government by 79 to 69 votes.

considerations which arise out of the present circumstances. I shall then take his pleasure as to the answer to the Address, which, if I am to be the adviser of it, cannot be a compliance with its request. I will take care that your Lordship shall have early intimation of the time when His Majesty may be pleased to receive it.

I return Mr. Littleton's letter. I had seen one from him this morning which gave an equally favourable account of his prospects. The coalition between Lord Ingestre and the political bruins is very disgraceful.[1]

Sir Martin Archer-Shee *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Cavendish Square: August 16, 1833

Your Lordship's letter dated the 14th from Marble Hill I received late last night. I beg to assure your Lordship that I am fully sensible of the liberal and flattering manner in which you have signified to me His Majesty's gracious intention to receive my portrait of your Lordship and find an appropriate situation for it in Windsor Castle.

The high estimation in which the King holds Lord Wellesley has led His Majesty to look with favour on the imperfect representation of that distinguished nobleman which my pencil has been able to produce. I am perfectly aware, my Lord, that to the subject of my picture, and not to its merits, I am indebted for the honourable destination thus assigned to it, and I am more than gratified

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 79.

by the reflection that to your Lordship's kindness I shall owe my first pictorial appearance in the Royal collection.

I shall immediately prepare the picture, and it will be ready for removal in the course of a week or ten days, when I shall be happy to receive your Lordship's instructions as to the proper person to whose care it should be addressed at Windsor Castle. The best mode of conveyance is, I believe, by a carriage which is called a *van*, and which will preclude the necessity of a packing-case for so short a distance.

In compliance with your Lordship's desire, I subjoin a memorandum which relates to the only subject of communication with your Lordship in which I can feel neither pride nor pleasure.

	£	s.	d.
Portrait, large, whole length ...	315	0	0
Paid at three payments ...	250	0	0
Remaining price of portrait ...	65	0	0
Frame and expenses of conveyance	39	15	0
Due	£104	15	0[1]

The state of Ireland was still a cause of great trouble to the Government, and Lord Anglesey, the Lord-Lieutenant, was at daggers drawn with O'Connell. "Things are now come to that pass," said Anglesey, "that the question is whether he or I shall govern Ireland." "I wish," O'Connell remarked, "that ridiculously self-conceited Lord

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 88.

Anglesey were out of Ireland. I take him to be our present greatest enemy." The bitter struggle between the men ceased only in September 1833, when Anglesey resigned, and Wellesley was appointed in his stead.

Wellesley's appointment was not well received in some quarters, and no one was more bitterly opposed to it than Charles Greville. "Yesterday," wrote the diarist on September 16, 1833, "the announcement of Lord Wellesley's appointment to be Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland was received with as great astonishment as ever I saw. Once very brilliant, probably never very efficient, he is worn out and effete. It is astonishing that they should send such a man; and one does not see why, because it is difficult to find a good man, they should select one of the very worst they could hit upon. It is a ridiculous appointment, which is the most objectionable of all. For years past he has lived entirely out of the world. He comes to the House of Lords, and talks of making a speech every now and then, of which he is never delivered, and he comes to Court, where he sits in a corner and talks (as those who know him say) with as much fire and liveliness as ever, and with the same neat, shrewd causticity that formerly distinguished him; but such scintillations as these

[1] Plunket was Lord Chancellor; Lieutenant-General Sir R. H. Vyvian Commander of the Forces; Littleton Chief Secretary; Francis Blackburn Attorney-General; and Philip Grafton Solicitor-General.

prove nothing as to his fitness for business and government, and as he was quite unfit for these long ago, it is scarcely to be supposed that retirement and increased age and infirmities should have made him so now." But presently Greville found that he had been mistaken, and he made the *amende honorable*. "Dined with Sefton yesterday," he noted on November 14. "Talked of Lord Wellesley, who, since he has been in Ireland, has astonished everybody by his activity and assiduity in business. He appeared, before he went, in the last stage of decrepitude, and they had no idea the energy was in him; but they say he is quite a new man, and it is not merely a splash, but neat and *bonâ-fide* business that he does." The fact is that taking up an administrative office revived Wellesley's dormant energies. He was not happy as Lord Steward with nothing to do, but the moment he was given work of importance and invested with authority he became the man he had been when he was taking his share of securing India for England.

The Cabinet was hopelessly divided on Irish affairs, especially on the question of the revenues of the Church, some Ministers holding that such revenue should be at the disposal of the State, others that it belonged absolutely to the Church. Henry Ward introduced in the House of Commons on May 27 a motion, seconded by Grote, that affirmed the right of the State to regulate

the distribution of Church property, and the expediency of reducing the Irish establishment; but Althorp begged the House to adjourn the debate, owing to the resignation of several important members of the administration.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Downing Street: May* 28, 1834

As you will necessarily have heard of the breach that has taken place in the Cabinet, I make use of the last moment before the post goes out, having been constantly occupied during the whole day, to tell you how matters now stand.

The Duke of Richmond, Lord Ripon, Mr. Stanley, and Sir J. R. Graham retire.[1] I did all I could to prevent this, but it was impossible.

The King, with the most flattering expressions of confidence, has empowered me to fill their places; and, contrary to my own first resolution, I have determined to go on with the Government, under all the embarrassments and difficulties to which it will be exposed. I could not resist the strong representations of the danger and confusion into which everything might be thrown by my giving it up.

The new arrangements are not yet made, but the offices that become vacant will be filled from

[1] The Duke of Richmond, Postmaster-General, was replaced by the Marquess of Conyngham; the Earl of Ripon, Lord Privy Seal, by the Earl of Carlisle; E. G. Stanley, Secretary of State for War and the Colonies, by Thomas Spring Rice; and Sir J. R. Graham, at the Admiralty, by Lord Auckland. Auckland, who had been at the Board of Trade, was succeeded by C. P. Thomson.

our own ranks, and in a way, I trust, which will be satisfactory to our minds and to the public.

You shall know the moment anything is settled. Excuse haste.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY
Private and confidential [*May* 1834]

As you and the Chancellor must be anxious to hear of *our news—les voici:*

I went to the King yesterday morning and was near an hour with him, and found His Majesty in a state of vigour and spirit and of confidence and cordial affection towards us all such as I cannot describe, and have never, I may say, seen equalled since we came in. He regrets the resignations, but speaks with ease of our filling up the blanks; and it *is* easy—though Stanley is an irreparable loss in debate. Our favour with His Majesty leaves no chance of failing, and my views of all things and all men were laid before him both verbally and in writing very fully.

He says he will stand fast by the Cabinet as long as it stands by itself, and *I for one will never abandon* the public service and leave all in remediless confusion as long as I can find any six men to stand with me; that is certain.

The confidence and delight of House of Commons and the public are unequalled. When Althorp said "confidence" last night they tell me such was the roar, and so long, as never was heard in that place.

Lord Grey in excellent heart.[2]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 141.
[2] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 143.

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Downing Street*
June 3, 1834

I could not, till the result of last night's division was known, say that everything was definitely settled. Indeed, there have been moments since I last wrote to your Excellency when I thought it would be impossible for me to continue in the Government.

The division of last night imposes on me the duty of going on, as long as I can hope to avert the difficulties in which both the King and the country might be involved by a change of the administration at this moment. I feel, however, by no means confident of my ability to sustain the duties which I have undertaken.

We have agreed to issue a Commission, such as was proposed by your Excellency at the beginning of the year, for enquiring into the circumstances of the Irish Church. It was then given up in consequence of the objections of those who resigned ; and this, considering that the concession has not accomplished the purpose for which it was made, is now much to be regretted.

The new appointments will be, as you will have seen in the papers: Ellice in the Cabinet ; Rice, Colonial Secretary ; Auckland, Admiralty.

Lord Carlisle, for whom I had designed the Privy Seal, wishes to decline it. I must, therefore, look out for another.

I congratulate you on the termination of the war in Portugal. On arriving at Montémor o Nova, after evacuating Santarem, Don Miguel pro-

posed an armistice. This was refused. He then retreated further to Evora, from whence he sent to accept the terms of submission which had been offered to him, and is to embark on board an English ship at [illegible]. Sarmento, the Portuguese Minister here, tells me that Don Carlos is to embark also. What is to be their destination I know not.[1]

Grey, who was now seventy years of age, no longer felt equal to the strain occasioned by holding the office of Prime Minister in troublous times, and he resigned on July 9, 1834. The King then sent for Melbourne, and expressed a desire for him to form a coalition Ministry that should include Peel and Wellington, but to this both Melbourne and Peel were averse, and in the end Melbourne went on with the old administration. He was succeeded at the Home Office by Duncannon. Althorp rejoined his friend as Leader of the House of Commons and Chancellor of the Exchequer,[2] and Hobhouse, who had been Secretary at War, became First Commissioner of Woods and Forests, with a seat in the Cabinet.

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private [*July* 1834]

All is well, all right. The Government will go well and truly on, though the loss of Lord Grey is

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 145.

[2] It was Althorp's resignation of his office and leadership in the Commons, consequent on Littleton's indiscretion (*see infra*), that had finally decided Grey to resign.

quite irreparable. The Cabinet is to be reconstructed in one place only, Lord Melbourne's,[1] Duncannon[2] coming in as Home Secretary, with a seat in the House of Lords, and Hobhouse has Woods. I have not a moment more but to say that we stood by *Littleton* stoutly, and nothing will be thought of that can annoy him. This is due to his interests as well as his connection with your Excellency.

These arrangements are, of course, not known to any but the Cabinet, so pray say nothing till next post.[3]

When in June 1834 it became necessary to consider the renewal of the Irish Coercion Bill, Littleton had a conversation with O'Connell in which, in order to placate the agitator, he told him that certain clauses would probably be omitted. The clauses in question were not omitted in the Bill, and O'Connell on July 3 charged the Government with breach of faith.[4] Grey declared his ignorance of the fact that there had been any communication with O'Connell. Littleton admitted that he had been guilty of

[1] Lord Melbourne had been Home Secretary under Grey, but now exchanged that position for the office of First Lord of the Treasury.

[2] John William Ponsonby, Viscount Duncannon (1781-1847). He entered the House of Commons in 1805, and was called to the House of Lords as Viscount Duncannon in 1834. He succeeded as (fourth) Earl of Bessborough in 1844, and was Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, 1846-1847.

[3] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 401.

[4] *See Hansard*, Series 3, vol. xxiv. p. 1100.

indiscretion, and tendered his resignation, which, however, was not accepted. He remained in office until Melbourne retired in November 1834. He was created Baron Hatherton in May 1835.

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *July* 1834

I have much satisfaction in assuring you that nothing could go off better than all did in the Lords last night, and I had a real gratification in both speaking from my heart as to your Excellency, as well as much pride also in stating how ridiculous all idea is of any of Lord Grey's colleagues having plotted to get him out, especially Althorp and myself, who had five times in one year kept him in by main force.

It is highly agreeable to find that Littleton has risen and not fallen in public opinion. In truth, he has gained over everyone by his manly and honourable and able conduct.

I enclose you a good inscription on Buonaparte, by Baron Williams, one of our new judges and *ἀνηρ πανφιλομουσος*.

If you like it I shall give you another.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private [*July* 19, 1834]

All went off admirably in both Houses last night.[2] Melbourne made another excellent speech,

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 153.

[2] Lord Wharncliffe in the House of Lords on July 18 moved that Wellesley's private correspondence on the Coercion Bill be laid before Parliament. After a debate, the motion was withdrawn.

firm, eloquent, and conciliatory; all allow this. Lord Grey almost exceeded himself in generous and honourable support of the Government, and said, "Had he been in our place he should *have taken our course.*" The absurdity of the motion was glaring, and Wortley gave it up; indeed, nobody supported him. He was *hustled* into making it because their wise and angry Lordships are all going to leave town and court the shade, associating with their dogs and sheep.

(You will naturally exclaim: "*Quid meruistis oves placidum pecus?*"!)

All agree you do right in not allowing your private correspondence to be produced, and Ellenborough alone, I believe, of either house, holds the novel doctrine that no Minister can write a private letter to a Lord-Lieutenant without consulting his colleagues. Indeed, if the correspondence I have the happiness to have with your Excellency were produced many a Lord would find it an unpleasant perusal. Remember me to the Chancellor.

You'll see the London Press furious at me, especially *The Times*, which must puzzle Lord Londonderry, whose faith is that I am the editor of that journal. The key to it is that they all wanted *dissolution* and *revolution*—or at least some confirm—and some want government at the mercy of the *gentlemen of the Press*, and they accuse me, most justly, I am glad to say, of having defeated their prospect by standing firm.

But my attacks in the Libel Committee on their slanders and their monopoly are also a cause of

Charles H. Lear, delt.

HENRY PETER, BARON BROUGHAM
From the National Portrait Gallery

this spite. I succeeded, I believe, in putting an end to the newspaper stamps, which the great papers hold to be one of their great securities against competition. I also have fulfilled a threat I then held out of ending the violent and slanderous Press by an *association*. For, joined by the most respectable merchants and bankers in London (Smith, Lloyd, Grote, and Goldsmith), and by lawyers, and by literary men, I have launched a Society for Diffusing Political Knowledge, and this *The Times* perceives will emancipate the "courteous readers" and put them in the hands of gentlemen.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *House of Lords*
August 8, 1834

We go on most perfectly in all respects. The Opposition Lords are supposed to have made up their minds to throw out the Irish Tithes Bill.[2] I will not say "Verily these men have a devil." But "they have a *Primate*," who is a weak man, and *he* wisely holds tithe can be collected by the ordinary course of the law. I fancy that the whole tithes collected will go into one small barn and leave room for the Bishops to have a dance in it.

I doubt, after all, if their courage will be so screwed up, but if it is, I know never were a more fatal error for the said Opposition. It will throw

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 201.

[2] O'Connell's plan of abandoning some two-fifths of the existing Irish tithes and partially compensating the owners out of suppressed bishopric revenues and a State grant was defeated in the House of Lords.

the Irish Church entirely on their hands, for who but they will be responsible for the starving? All our colleagues are firm. We shall fight it to the uttermost, and if the Bill is lost, the fault is not ours. At all events, the poor Opposition folks have ascertained fully that, throw it out as they please, they will throw out nobody else.

I have at present the inconvenience of a Bishop preaching upon bastardy in my right ear. His discourse is composed of equal parts of bawdry and blasphemy, and, notwithstanding, it proves so dull that I see the peers are yawning by benches at a time.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Brougham: August* 21, 1834

I have reached my Penates at length, and "*solutus curis*" am reposing "*desiderato lecto.*"

The folly of the Lords seems well felt throughout the country, and it certainly—however hurtful to the Irish Church—is very much to our benefit, selfishly speaking, and has really done for the Opposition as much as twenty defeats.

I am credibly informed that the Irish parsons gave their voices against the Bill in pure fear of their Bishops, who had no interest in it anyway as they supposed, but who will perhaps find the contrary if their incredible folly shall pull down the inferior parts of the fabric.

The decided tone assumed of late by the Government, and their putting the Lords and their votes so entirely out of the question, has given

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 167.

our friends in the country mighty comfort and confidence.

The Scotch are in high glee particularly, and it is, as your Excellency knows, a thrifty and calculating people. They are inviting Lord Grey and myself to a grand banquet. As they are of the wise and reflecting race who admit the impossibility of a country living on stimulants for years, and therefore rest satisfied with one or two great measures a session (and well may they truly), it seems to me that we cannot too much encourage them and show respect for them. They have a House of Commons club of forty-eight out of fifty-three Scotch members—all supporting us—and they gave Althorp, Melbourne, and myself a dinner some weeks ago—when your Excellency's health was so warmly received that I conclude they have already invited you to the ministerial banquet of next month. If you had time it would be well worth while to come for a few days to Portpatrick, among your friends, and see as many of your old Indian followers as are anywhere scattered there.

I set off next week with my daughter on a pilgrimage to the shrine of the Countess at Dunrobin.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential [*Sept.*] 1834

I have just been proroguing to 23rd October in case Ireland shall (which it will not) require a November meeting. But it will be the less likely to require it if we are seen to be prepared.

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 169.

My Scotch tour was very unexpectedly and not very agreeably turned into business instead of relaxation, by the great kindness of the people wherever I went. Had I foreseen it, I should certainly not have stirred from my fireside, but being once in for it, I resolved to go through with it so as to do good to the Government, and the stability of the country's institutions. I really think I *preached the word* with some good fruits. The enthusiasm for the Government all over Scotland is at its acme, and Lord Grey's reception in the north was as gratifying as could be wished by his warmest friends. The same reception attended me all the way home, and on the Scotch border I was drawn through a town, every house of which belongs to the Duke of Buccleuch and is at his gate, *all* the people literally flocking, of *all ranks*. If any fools believed Lord Grey and I to be foes, the familiar footing on which we were in the face of all, both in public and private, must have opened their silly eyes—even to the trifle of my girl (Miss Spalding) being chaperoned by his ladies to the assembly which both of us wanted to attend. All is right and well here; John Company (your old friend) wants a Governor-General of John's own shop—a second *chop-statesman* called Metcalfe,[1] and John is busy intriguing for this, but we have to-day given his honour a most

[1] Charles Theophilus Metcalfe (1785-1846), who had been Resident of Hyderabad, 1820-1827, and a Member of the Supreme Council from that year. He was appointed Provisional Governor-General in 1835, and in 1836 Lieutenant-Governor of the North West Provinces. He held other high appointments, and was in 1845 created Baron Metcalfe.

positive *no* to this or anything of this sort. I shall soon let you know more of the matter. Colonel Grant wants to go, and we shall do all we can for him, but I see no chance of said Company taking him. So it may be Auckland,[1] whom I dare to say John would swallow. I have sent for my man of confidence in the India House to sound and hear all about their views, and I shall let you know when I have seen him. What think you of this whole matter? I need not say this is quite *entre nous*.

I beg my best respects and regards to Lady Wellesley, and in this Miss Spalding joins. We go to Brougham to-morrow.[2]

The death of Lord Spencer on November 10, which withdrew Althorp from the House of Commons, necessitated a rearrangement of ministerial offices, and Melbourne proposed Lord John Russell as leader of the Lower House; but the King was bitterly opposed to him, in consequence of the line of conduct he had taken in the case of the Irish Church Bill. He was angry at the tremendous success of Brougham's progress through Scotland, and also he was weary of Whig dictation. After much negotiation Melbourne resigned on November 14. The King sent for Wellington, who recommended Peel as the most

[1] George Eden, second Baron Auckland (1784-1849), was appointed Governor-General of India, 1835. He was created Earl of Auckland, 1839.

[2] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 175.

suitable Prime Minister. His Majesty consenting, Peel, who was at Rome, was sent for, Wellington, in the meantime, holding all the Secretaryships of State. Peel arrived in London on December 9, and at once began to constitute a Ministry. Peel himself was First Lord of the Treasury and Chancellor of the Exchequer ; the Home, Foreign, and War members were, respectively, Goulburn, Wellington, and Aberdeen, and the Lord Chancellor the Earl of Rosslyn. Wellesley was succeeded in Ireland by the Earl of Haddington.

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private [*November* 1834]

I was so busy yesterday I had no time to write. The Court intrigue has succeeded, and His Majesty, solely because Althorp was removed from the House of Commons, has made the Duke of Wellington Minister and commanded the three Secretaries of State to give up their respective seals to-morrow, when he holds a council to receive them. No difference of opinion, no disapprobation of our manners, no disagreement among ourselves is present. But we are said by His Majesty not to have the House of Commons now that Althorp is gone from it ; and the *suggestion* (worthy of all the powers of reasoning which distinguish the eminent logician now at the head of His Majesty's counsels) : " Therefore let me have a Ministry whom neither this nor the next House of Commons can endure "—observe the reasons

given about loss of confidence—makes it extremely difficult to dissolve said House, for if he dissolves his Ministry because the Parliament confides *too little* in them, he cannot very consistently dissolve his Parliament for confiding *too much*. But still less could he do so after meeting them and their passing a vote in our favour, so that I expect a dissolution.

I wrote to His Majesty a letter, of which I enclose a copy. The thing is strong, for it tells His Majesty: "You choose to ruin the country. I wash my hands of your proceeding, and hold you answerable for the consequences," and above all I warned His Majesty about dissolving, as that would make another dissolution necessary afterwards. Nevertheless, his answer is extremely gracious, the most so I ever received! I think this has a view to my new position as an Opposition chief. His Majesty says he well knows the ability and indefatigable zeal which I put into all I undertake. Aye, but His Majesty's royal father and brother could have told him something of the zeal I have when in *Opposition*, and which his new Government will soon see.[1]

[Enclosure]

Lord Brougham *to* The King

[*November* 1834]

Most Gracious Sovereign,

I have received the intimation through Viscount Melbourne of Your Majesty having come to the

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 186.

resolution of dismissing your present Ministers in consequence of Lord Althorp's removal from the House of Commons.

That Your Majesty in this, as in every other act of Your Majesty, is guided solely by the sense of duty, and by your views of what you really deem for the good of your country, is a truth of which I have an intimate persuasion, and to which I yield an unhesitating assent; at the same time, I should have felt that a very heavy and indeed an unbearable load of responsibility rested on me if I had not set before Lord Melbourne, for the purpose of being submitted to Your Majesty, my own decided opinion upon the inevitable consequences of such a proceeding at the present moment. Lord Melbourne has sufficiently explained the grounds of that opinion to relieve me from being in any way answerable for whatever may be the result. No one can more earnestly pray that it may be such as will contribute to the good of the State and to Your Majesty's own personal satisfaction.

My own retirement from Your Majesty's service will be accompanied with a sense, too deep ever to be effaced from my mind, of the gratitude which I owe my Sovereign for his unvarying kindness and the uniformly gracious manner in which he has condescended to accept my poor endeavours to assist him in the government of his realms. The last efforts which I had made in this behalf were directed towards investigating the impatience which in many quarters seemed dangerous to the country, without leading to any sound or

satisfactory measures of amendment—and though this change may frustrate these attempts, which had certainly begun to be attended with success, I shall ever retain an attachment to the principles on which I have always acted, steering clear alike of the policy of those who will have no improvement, and of those whom no change can satisfy. Nor, let me add, will any vicissitudes of party connection, to which I am as likely as any man to be exposed, ever make me, in all that personally concerns Your Majesty, forget for a moment the obligations which your gracious kindness have laid upon me. I should not, while I convey for the last time my sentiments to Your Majesty's will, discharge the duty of a loyal subject or faithful counsellor, if I did not humbly, but very earnestly, express the hope that the experiment of a Tory Government may, if possible, be tried without dissolving Parliament. If so—as failure may lead to no extensive and irreparable evils—if it be accompanied with one dissolution and then fails, as I conscientiously believe it must, a second appeal to the country will be inevitable, and no man can foresee the consequence of that.[1]

EDWARD JOHN LITTLETON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Grosvenor Place : December 2, 1834

I write this on the chance of your receiving it before your departure—not that you will lose much missing it.

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 188.

I leave town this morning for Staffordshire, where I have much to do. I have not seen the King, as no Court has been held since my arrival. I have written a note to Sir Herbert Taylor, which I hope will satisfy His Majesty of my respectful intentions, and procure me a continuance of the *entrée*, and the privilege of wearing the official uniform. Lord Spencer advised me how to write.

The ex-Ministers, still holding their seals and keys, of which there are several (Lord Spencer, Auckland, Hobhouse, P. Thomson, and Attorney-General), met to-day to consider whether they should not remonstrate with the Duke or the King on their embarrassing situation under their provisional derangement, already prolonged most unconstitutionally, and apparently likely to continue for some time. The general feeling, however, was that they were in no degree compromised by it, in that the longer it continued, the greater would be the Duke's difficulty in justifying it to Parliament. Nothing, therefore, will be said about it by them at present.

The Duke, *Shawe*, Lord Lyndhurst and Lord Rosslyn are at work daily on our Irish Church Reform Bill! I am assured that this is the fact on very good authority.

Leslie Porter a commissioner of the Great Seal! I have sent an article to *The Morning Chronicle* about it.

I am extremely sorry I shall not see you on your road through Staffordshire, nor, indeed, probably till Parliament meets. It would be very satisfactory to me to know how the King receives you,

and whether he offers you an opportunity of speaking your opinion. I have not a doubt that the Duke of Wellington will, if he decently can, postpone your audience.

Mrs. Petre told me last night she had seen a letter from the Queen that morning, in which Her Majesty said: "May God prosper the King's noble undertaking."

I expect a bitter contest in Staffordshire. The Tories will all desert me, and the Radicals will support me. I had rather it was the other way. But . . .[1]

EARL GREY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Howick: December 9, 1834.

By this time, or about this time, I "calculate" that you will be in London, and therefore no longer delay thanking you for your very kind letter, which I received a few days ago.

I concluded that the extraordinary event which we have lately witnessed would occasion your resignation. The manner of it surprised me very much. Circumstances concerned to inspire me with a belief that the existence of the late administration had become very precarious, and that its dissolution would probably be hastened by the death of Lord Spencer, which might have been expected at any moment during the last three years. But the manner in which it was at once dismissed *à la militaire* by His Highness the Dictator, had never, I confess, offered itself to my imagination.

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 190.

You ask my opinion as to the consequences of this event, and of the conduct which it would be expedient to pursue upon it. Both are matters of difficult speculation. With respect to the first, I see no consequences that might not be disastrous. It appears to me impossible that the new Ministers can conduct the Government upon the new principles of moderate but efficient reform; and I do not see how either this country or Ireland can be governed on any other. They could not exist for a week with the present House of Commons. I look upon a dissolution, therefore, as inevitable and immediate. Will it produce a Parliament more suitable to their purpose? I doubt it. The moderate Whigs may and probably will fail in many of the elections; the new House therefore will come to be more divided between Toryism and Radicalism, which I conceive to be the worst thing that can happen. It will render the Commons more unmanageable by this or any other Government.

As to what is to be done in so perplexing a state of affairs, it is a question to be answered by those who must take henceforward the lead in active politics, rather than by me. I consider myself as having taken leave of public life for ever, except upon occasions when some important question may require that I should, as a matter of duty, take a part. I should recommend great moderation as far as it may be practicable, with a steady adhering to the principles of the late Government. But it is easier to say this in general than to suggest a plan of action according to

which a system of policy can be worked out. The tendency of things is to engage men on different sides with extreme principles, and it seems hardly possible for an active politician to steer between them or take an even course. I have already proof of this here. Howick has offered himself again to his constituents on the moderate principles which I have stated. He is, nevertheless, opposed by a Tory candidate brought forward by the Duke of Northumberland. His most active supporters, still influenced by the excitement of the Reform Bill, and, like men used to brandy, not satisfied with any weaker liquor, require something more pungent than what he has offered them. He will probably, therefore, be obliged to take a higher tone, but, I trust, without overstepping those limits which a sense of duty, paramount to any private interest, must prescribe. For the rest I should entirely approve of a line for them in uniformity with the views so ably and so prudently described in Lord Melbourne's answers to the Derbyshire address.

Harry was very sorry not to see you again before you left Ireland, but as it could only have been for two or three days, and I was able to obtain an extension of his leave of absence from his regiment till the end of January, I thought you would excuse my taking him with me.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 194.

CHARLES THEOPHILUS METCALFE[1] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

India : December 23, 1834

Few things in life have given me greater pleasure than the receipt of your Lordship's kind letter, delivered by Lieutenant Campbell. It is now within a few days of thirty-four years since I had the honour of being presented to you. You were then the Governor-General of India, and I was a boy of fifteen entering on my career. I shall never forget the kindness with which you treated me, from first to last, during your stay in India, nor the honour and happiness which I enjoyed in being for a considerable period a member of your family. So much depends on the first turn given to a man's course, that I have a right to attribute all of good that has since happened to me to the countenance and favour with which you distinguished me at that early period. My public principles were learned in your school, pre-eminently the school of honour, zeal, public spirit, and patriotism, and to my adherence to the principles there acquired I venture to ascribe all the success that has attended me.

As I was proceeding to join the new presidency, after being relieved from the vice-presidentship at Fort William by the return of the Governor-General from Madras, about the time of Lieutenant Campbell's removal from England, I asked him

[1] Charles Theophilus Metcalfe (1785-1846) held various official positions in India, and was provisional Governor-General 1835-6 ; he was very successful as Governor of Jamaica, 1837-42, and was Governor-General of Canada 1843-5; he was created Baron Metcalfe in 1845.

to accompany me, his regiment being also in that quarter. We are now together on our march. I shall seriously look out for an opportunity of advancing him. It may be more distant and more difficult than I wish, or altogether impracticable, owing to the retention by the supreme Government of all patronage connected with the army, but I will ascertain his views and do my best for him as soon as I can.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

London: May [1834]

Many thanks, my dear Lord Wellesley, for your kind and entertaining letter. Here I am till November, or rather I am at Brighton, but I came up to swear in Pepys[2] as Master of the Rolls. We expect Bickersteth[3] will succeed as Solicitor-General.

Well, the Honourable Company Behauder held a council on Saturday and made a desperate plunge in favour of Metcalfe, refusing a motion of adjournment by fourteen to four, and carrying a cunningly devised resolution by sixteen to two that Metcalfe should be appointed provisionally while the new system is brought into operation. Now, as this may be five or ten years, it meant

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 198.

[2] Sir Charles Christopher Pepys, third Baronet (1781-1851), Solicitor-General, 1834; Master of the Rolls, 1834-1836; created first Baron Cottenham in 1836 on his appointment as Lord Chancellor, which office he held until 1841; re-appointed Lord Chancellor 1846; raised to an earldom, 1850.

[3] Henry Bickersteth (1783-1851), called to the bar, 1811; took silk, 1827; created Baron Langdale of Langdale in 1836, when he succeeded Pepys as Master of the Rolls.

in truth to appoint Metcalfe Governor-General. This is seen through and will be at once rejected by the controlling power. Indeed, I fancy Grant must have some pleasure in so doing, as the vote was really against himself. It seems to put him almost *hors de combat*, which I regret much, as he was greatly bent on it, though we should all deeply feel his loss.

The Dissenters and University speech, dedicated to your Excellency (as is most due), is just got through the Press, and a dedication copy will be sent as soon as binders will allow.

I dined yesterday at Holland House ; all well. Lady Holland is going to treat him with a week at Ampthill, which delights our friends as much as you used to enjoy taking a native kingdom. I doubt if any such great operation would make Lord Holland more happy. Lord Lansdowne was there, being in town on his way for a trip to Belgium. But *this time* Lady Lansdowne comes up to-morrow to accompany him, for she considerately thinks that a man always likes to travel about (especially should Paris be in the wind) with his wife and family about him.

I am quite delighted you have seen Lord Duncannon. I assure you the pleasure has been mutual. He writes in raptures.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Cannes (en Provence)*
New Year's Day, 1835

I wish you and yours many happy New Years.

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 207.

In the word *yours* I do not include [a] "certain Duc" [Wellington], for to him I wish many returns not of the *season* but of the *session* which is approaching, and which he will find worse than any one French or Mahratta general he ever licked found his beating.

I am anxious to tell you first why I am here and not in London; next, what I think of affairs. I came abroad to recreate my health, ruined after thirty-four years of slavery, with the liberty and the *liberties* of Paris. Peel would gravely and consequentially put it down as a discovery that liberty is good and licentiousness is wrong. I agree with him, especially being at Cannes. Were I at Paris I should crave a short exception. My stay at Paris would have been a week, but I heard that the good people, not of England, but of Brooks's, had laid me under an *ostracism*. In truth it really was such for a fortnight or three weeks, and all I could learn of the cause was, that no reason was assigned; nor indeed could any, for all I had done was to refuse a pension of £5,000 a year. Seeing the prevalence of this folly, I resolved to come and see some old and dear friends I have in the north of Italy, and to examine minutely the state of things in the south of France, well knowing that the said *ostracism* would be soon over, and that it would then be in my power to make them eat the shells of their own oysters. I always intended to be back before the meeting [of Parliament] one week at least, and so I shall.

Here I find the beast-ridden and priest-ridden

Government of Sardinia (your Lordship remembers its follies well) has chosen to lay all France and Italy under an interdict because five or six people out of 160,000 died of cholic at Marseilles after keeping Christmas ; and though I have not been near Marseilles, all I can obtain is fifteen days off my quarantine.

I have refused and now go to Hières, Toulon, and Marseilles, whence I wish I could send cholera and put to death the Sardinian Government.

Then as to England : I am clear that Duke Arthur's sense is better than Peel's, and that he never dreams really of returning in power after dissolution, but that he hopes by that necessary step to increase his minority in the Commons enough to give the majority in Opposition in the Lords spirit to resist all reforms. I can calculate his plans no other way. Not to dissolve would be drivelling. The elections may give him 100 more than he has, and leave him in a minority of 250 to 400 ; but that is better by much than his present position. I write to no one else, avoiding all correspondence, but I did not leave Paris without transmitting much good ammunition, which I hope has been well used. This is January, and I am sitting at 7 p.m. with the windows open. What a divine climate.[1]

EDWARD JOHN LITTLETON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

January 23, 1835

I like decided advice, and therefore was not

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 211.

at all displeased with Duncannon's letter. Indeed, its spirit towards myself is evidently most friendly. I return it to you and will write to Duncannon myself to-morrow.

The fact is, Spring Rice[1] means to occupy the ground whenever he sees a fair opening. I have perceived him working at this object for these last four years. He was furious when Lords Grey and Althorp promised me the Government support two years ago. When you see Grey, he will tell you many proofs of Spring Rice's ill-humour on that score, and of the plans he then formed to dislodge me. He has been busily at work with the Whigs in town ever since the dissolution of Parliament to promote his own views. Knowing that he had his ground good with his late colleagues, if Abercromby[2] could be propitiated, he has opened the discussion in the newspapers, making his advance under other names, in order that they, and not he, might receive the enemies' fire. You will see he will show himself when he can no longer conceal his purpose.

I have always felt so confident that he was not popular with the majority of the party, that, had there been an actual vacancy in the Chair by the removal of Manners-Sutton[3] I should not

[1] Thomas Spring Rice (1790-1866) was Secretary to the Treasury, 1830-4; Chancellor of the Exchequer, 1834 and 1835-9; created Baron Monteagle, 1839.

[2] James Abercromby (1776-1858), a son of Sir Ralph Abercromby; Speaker of the House of Commons, 1835-9; created Baron Dunfermline, 1839.

[3] Sir Charles Manners-Sutton (1780-1845), Speaker of the House of Commons from 1817. In 1835 he was accused of partisanship, and was not re-elected. In that year he was raised to the peerage as Viscount Canterbury.

have hesitated at once to accept the offers of support that have been made to me, and to desire my friends to canvass for me. When Lord Melbourne might have had time to learn the general opinion, I should have appealed to him; and I should have had little doubt that that process would have produced on his mind the same favourable effect that the same course did on the minds of Lord Grey and Lord Althorp two years ago. Having kept my friends quiet, while Spring Rice has been at work, has made them imagine the majority is for him, and as far as declarations go it must appear so.

I am sure no one will displace Manners-Sutton if he is proposed. The intention of Peel, I imagine, was to make him and Goulburn change places. His force in the House of Commons will not enable him to carry Goulburn. Sir C. Manners-Sutton, therefore, will be compelled, *bien malgré lui*, to take the harness again. I cannot support Spring Rice. Were I now to support him I should be pledged to him for a future occasion. But I have also personal objections to him, in acting on which I am guilty of no littleness. I cannot in a letter state them, but Craig shall see you, if you will permit him, and satisfy you of the propriety of my motives.

If Abercromby stands, my respect and personal regard for him would induce me to support him, though I should still think his chance a bad one.

I write this solely for your own information. Your great kindness to me on this and on all other occasions entitles you to know all my motives.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 223.

LORD HOLLAND *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *January* 29, 1835

Melbourne and John Russell have come to town and have seen Abercromby. He says, "He will serve as Speaker if chosen, but will not solicit nor express any opinion on the expediency of proposing him." They determined to put their application to him and his answer into the formal shape of a correspondence, and then to request a committee of House of Commons friends to ascertain by canvass the prospect of success, reserving to themselves the right of dropping the scheme if it should be very doubtful. The advantages of this course of proceeding I apprehend to be this: having now determined at all hazard to attempt the exclusion of Sutton, they would, if the result of the canvass prove unfavourable, be disposed to consider calmly the comparative disadvantages of submission without battle, and of battle and defeat. It is quite clear that Abercromby and Abercromby *only* gives them a chance of success. It is almost equally clear to *me* that if there is *no* chance of success, it is highly desirable, if it be practicable, not to hazard a battle.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SIR FRANCIS BURDETT

Private and confidential *Clarendon Hotel* *February* 6, 1835

No excuse can be pleaded for this intrusion but my sincere respect and esteem for your high

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 230.

public character and my extreme anxiety that its powerful influence should not be alienated from the great cause to which the Empire now looks with so much solicitude.

The administration of the executive power has fallen into hands of which the nation has plainly signified its distrust, and a general union has been formed for the purpose of rescuing the State from this dangerous usurpation, and of opening the way to the restoration of a more liberal Government, and of securing the ultimate benefits of the late reform in the representation of the people.

It appears most expedient for this purpose that the earliest occasion should be taken to manifest the determination of the House of Commons to maintain without deviation, and in the most vigorous manner, the principles of the reform and the general character of liberality, civil and religious, so strenuously asserted by the Parliament which has been dissolved.

The election of a Speaker will afford the first trial of those principles and of that character, and the nation will be grievously disappointed if the choice of its representatives should fall on any person not fully tried and approved by conduct and public service and one animated by the same spirit which pervades the whole body of the people.

That Sir Charles Manners-Sutton is not such a person now requires no proof; without any reflection on his character it is now eviden that he is firmly attached to a system which the people

disapprove, and which they have earnestly endeavoured to destroy.

But it has further appeared that Sir Charles Manners-Sutton, having been generously entrusted by the House of Commons with the high and confidential office of their Speaker, has been unfaithful to that sacred charge, and has been actively engaged in the expulsion of public servants possessing the confidence of Parliament, and afterwards in the dissolution of that House of Commons by whose favour he had been distinguished with special honours and emoluments.

To elect him would be to sanction all his acts since his last election, and amongst them his act of ingratitude towards his patron and benefactor, the late House of Commons.

This case is very different from the circumstances under which he was chosen by the late House of Commons. The event has proved that confidence was then misplaced and has been abused. At that time no such charge was alleged, and therefore your arguments, in your excellent speech on that occasion, are not at all inconsistent with a different course in the present case.

His first election, to preside over the first reformed Parliament, is, in truth, a decisive precedent against his re-election to the same honour; it has proved the danger and mischief of placing such an authority in the hands of any enemy to reform. His conduct in promoting and assisting the expulsion of the late administration and the dissolution of the late Parliament furnishes a substantive and sufficient ground for

excluding him from the Chair on the present occasion. They who raised him to the Chair are now fully justified (if not positively required) to vindicate the precedent which they established from false and mischievous misapplication, and to manifest to the people that confidence abused will not be renewed, and that, although the most exalted wisdom and integrity may occasionally be deceived, the time will come when "public faith will be cleared from the shameful brand of public fraud."

The observations are submitted to you in consequence of a prevalent rumour that the generosity and benevolence of your temper will induce you to admit the nomination of Sir C. Manners-Sutton to the Chair on the 19th inst. Such an indulgence on your part would deeply affect the character of the general cause, although I do not think it would frustrate the success of that cause, so powerfully is it founded in the almost universal support of the people, and of sound public opinion.

But the choice of a Speaker will be the first trial of strength between the Government and the people, whom His Majesty says he is resolved to meet, and whose advice he desires to receive in Parliament. I am convinced (and I have employed some pains to gain information) that a considerable majority of the House of Commons will reject Sir C. Manners-Sutton. It would, however, be most painful if your voice should not sanction his exclusion; your support of him would be construed into an inclination towards the Government which nominates him, and such a notion would furnish

them with a strength (tending perhaps towards temporary, however baseless, stability) of which they are now totally destitute.

The object of the nation is to repulse this usurpation, which has obtained power by a combination of fraud and violence almost unequalled in all the black catalogue of human wickedness.

The general sentiment is that the battle (in Lord Chatham's language) must be "prompt, short, sharp, and decisive," and if it be not prompt the remaining epithets will be vain and idle.

The question, therefore, of the choice of a Speaker being the first, involving the principle of reform, the character of the House of Commons, and the influence of the present administration opposed to the voice of the people, on this primary ground the repulse should be given with every possible energy of fortitude, vigour, and skill.

The importance of effecting a speedy dissolution of the present administration is sufficiently apparent in every part of the Empire, and in all its relations foreign and domestic, but more especially in Ireland. My accounts from that country, from most authentic and impartial sources, state that the Orange faction is in possession of the Government, that the most odious and long-exploded Orange partisans, ecclesiastical, civil and legal, lead the public councils, and that the Government is employing every effort to fill all the offices with the most notorious and flaming bigots, and that a religious conflict of the most dreadful description is rapidly approaching. This crisis is anxiously desired by too many in Ireland, and

it is now urged and even hurried on by the Government, as if they foresaw their speedy dissolution, and were eager to complete their designs before it should overtake them.

Here is an additional and most urgent call for a speedy blow in Parliament. Whenever I can have the honour of seeing you I will produce to you such documents from Ireland as will fill your benignant mind with indignation and horror.

For God's sake interpose your great powers to deliver us from all these evils, and strike your first blow to save the Commons of the Empire from the degradation and ignominy of again confiding the custody of their privileges to him who has once betrayed them![1]

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

West Cliff House: February 10, 1835

There is no man's opinion, upon any statesmanlike subject, that would carry with it more weight in my mind than yours, and I have given all the consideration to the letter you have done me the honour to write, upon a mere party question, the choice of a Speaker of the House of Commons, which the ability you manifest upon every subject you touch upon cannot fail to command. I cannot, however, come to any other conclusion than that which I previously had arrived at on the impossibility of my acting upon this occasion but in the same manner as upon the last, when I proposed Sir C. Manners-Sutton—as I cannot but

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 234.

SIR FRANCIS BURDETT
From a lithograph

feel, with all respect for Mr. Abercromby, that there is no comparison between the two as to the point at issue, no more than between St. Paul's and a nutshell; and I cannot but think it unwise in the Whigs to make battle upon this ground. As to Ireland, Mr. O'Connell and his priests go far to justify the Orangemen, and will, I think, certainly and greatly strengthen the administration. What wonder Ireland produces no venomous reptiles, seeing that her erect walking serpents absorb all her venom?[1]

Peel's first administration did not endure long. After the general election of January 1835 the Conservatives numbered 270, but they might at any moment be outvoted by the Whigs, the Radicals, and the Irish, a combination far from unlikely, as was soon to be proved. On the meeting of Parliament on February 9, the first task was to elect a Speaker. The Government proposed the re-election of Manners-Sutton, the Opposition Abercromby, and, in a House of no less than 622, the latter was elected by a majority of six. Peel was defeated again and again, and on April 7, when, on the Irish Church Bill, he found himself in a minority of twenty-seven, he tendered his resignation to the King. Melbourne returned to power with most of his old colleagues, but without Brougham, to whom Melbourne would not again offer the Woolsack. The Great Seal

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 238.

was placed in commission, Lord Cottenham being appointed Lord Chancellor in the following January. Nor was Wellesley invited to return to Ireland, but was given the post of Lord Chamberlain.

Viscount Melbourne *to* The Marquess Wellesley

South Street: April 19, 1835

I am sensible that I must have appeared to you both negligent and ungrateful, and during the last week I have often reproached myself severely for not having before answered your letter and communicated personally with you. Constant occupation made it impossible. It has not been the want either of respect or of affection. I feel that most deeply, especially the last, as well for personal liking as for the gratitude which I owe you.

It gave me great pain to be unable to offer you your former situation, but plainly and frankly, after what passed last summer, it always appeared to me that if the Government should break up it would be impossible before a reconstruction again to constitute the Government of Ireland as it was then constituted.

I hope you will allow me to offer you one of the best offices in the Household, which I know will be agreeable to His Majesty. Your acceptance will be some consolation to me in circumstances most worrying to my feelings, and for which I trust you will make some allowance.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 254.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

Clarendon Hotel: April 19, 1835

The very great kindness of your most obliging letter has relieved me from painful suspense, and satisfied me that I still possess (what I have ever valued with the highest estimation) your respect and affection.

The best assurance which I can offer of my sincerity in returning those sentiments is to accept without hesitation the offer which you make of one of the great offices of the Household.

If the office of Lord Chamberlain should be vacant I should prefer that, and I shall then devote the remainder of a long life to the assiduous discharge of my duty in His Majesty's service, to whom I owe every obligation of affection and gratitude for uniform kindness and favour, extended to me for above half a century.

With the most anxious wish for your success in the great charge you have undertaken . . .[1]

LADY WELLESLEY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

April 24, 1835

Ally's[2] letter of the 21st confirms the report of your not returning to Ireland. I have no further news except from the papers, which say that you have accepted the office of Lord Chamberlain. I have no language strong enough to express my indignation at the treachery, the baseness, the impudence of Lord Melbourne and his followers.

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 256.

[2] Alfred Montgomery.

Did no one express their horror at such conduct to such a man, and under such circumstances, the party owing you everything ? I fervently hope, as soon as the Irish Church is settled, the King will turn them out. A trick so dishonourable to men, so silly as statesmen, cannot succeed. I am confident you would not have had any office but for the King, and I think by his not insisting on your return to Ireland he will get rid of them. Ireland is the object of his greatest solicitude, and if he thought the Whigs were firm in their places he would not have trusted so silly a profligate (whom he never liked) to govern that country. I have renounced *for ever* all my Whiggery. The Tories as friends would not *twice* have put such a man in the Household. For myself, I have not a wish to return to Ireland, or for any office ; I should prefer your living in the country, but I hope and believe I shall yet see you *triumph over your enemies*.

I am delighted to hear from Ally that you are well. I have scarcely left my bed for a week. The cold has gone upon my chest and I am really very unwell. I have not seen Lord Cowley for nearly two weeks ; he is very attentive in calling. He thinks you have been infamously treated, and the general opinion is, that Mr. O'Connell has made his selection, as he can govern Ireland through Lord Mulgrave, and not if you were Lord-Lieutenant. I believe the Whigs may say this, but I do not believe O'Connell has had anything to do with it. It is not surprising that an act of such folly and unkindness the party should

try and find an excuse for. Keep up your spirits and your health. God has protected you under many difficulties, and in His merciful goodness will yet bring you *through triumphantly*. I hope to leave Paris the 2nd of May. Mama and Bessy beg their best love ; their lamentations are doleful. Culling Smith is still confined to his room. I have not heard when Lord Cowley returns to England. I am still in suspense about your office. If you take it you will be bored, but there are *advantages* which you cannot have out of office. If I only consulted my wishes, I should not like you to accept any office ; but under present circumstances I hope you may accept. What becomes of Much Ado ? Is he to be a peer ?

Poor Ally, I often think of him ; tell him with my love I have written so much I have nothing more to say. I am anxious to know what is to become of the Duke of Devonshire.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Salt Hill*

[*April* 1835]

MY DEAR LORD CHAMBERLAIN,

Many thanks for your kind letter announcing the improbable—not to say the *impossible*—transmutation of our *theatrical* and excellent friend Mulgrave into a viceroy, and yourself into a Superintendent of Stage Plays.[2] It is a feat of our harlequin friend Melbourne's round which diverts and surprises rather than pleases me.

[1] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 18.

[2] One of the duties of the Lord Chamberlain is the licensing of plays.

The allusion to the *mysteria promissa* naturally enough occurred to the prosecuted—possibly to the bystanders. But it required Melbourne's ingenuous and honest nature to make it actually be avowed by himself (this is quite *entre nous*) as a parallel case, in a letter I had from him yesterday. Many a time have the excitable triumvirs been much more closely imitated, but never with so much *candour*. In fact, Melbourne is not to blame. Howick, through Lord Grey, rules all things, and he has *two* followers in the House of Commons, *viz.*, his two brothers, and no more.[1]

THE REV. H. WELLESLEY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Dunsfold, Godalming*
May 10, 1835

My removal to this neighbourhood has among other advantages procured me the intimate acquaintance of a very worthy and respectable family, Dr. and Mrs. Mackenzie of the Rectory, Hascombe. They have a young and very pleasing daughter to whom I have become deeply attached, and who accepts me for a husband with corresponding feelings. Her good sense, disposition, and acquirements give me every hope of her proving a valuable wife and making the happiness of my life. As she is, *of course*, a *goddess*, my report of her beauty and merits cannot be received, but Hyacinthe has made her acquaintance, and is willing and able to speak of her very highly. She

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 258.

thinks the match likely to be happy to myself, free from objections and from any circumstances unpleasant to my family or my friends.

As there is a *son*, she brings to *me* no fortune, but her own means and prospects are very fair, and she has been accustomed to live in the same moderate, retired way as myself, without any taste for dissipation and expense.

In taking this step I trust and pray that I may obtain your approbation and sanction, and that your blessing will rest upon the happy prospect now before me.

May I add the hope that you will *continue* to interest yourself in my preferment, which now becomes to me an object *doubly* important? Some favourable occasions may arise, and perhaps there may be some pieces of clerical patronage in the Lord Chamberlain's department. I believe that he appoints the King's chaplains upon a vacancy, and to obtain *that* could not but be of advantage to me. There is no emolument, but it is a step, and gives rank, and above all would appease my longing for something which I might *be known* to owe only to your affection and influence.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

Private and confidential — *Clarendon Hotel*
May 11, 1835

After having fully considered all the circumstances connected with the recent change in the

[1] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 29.

Government of Ireland, together with the relation which they bear to my public character and honour, I feel it to be impossible for me to retain the office which I now hold in His Majesty's service. I therefore request your Lordship to submit to His Majesty (with the humble assurance of my most grateful duty) my desire to resign the office of Lord Chamberlain to His Majesty's Household.[1]

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

South Street: May 11, 1835

I have this instant received your Lordship's letter of this day, marked private and confidential.

It is needless for me to assure your Lordship that I have read it with great concern, but I will lose no time in submitting to His Majesty the desire expressed on the part of your Lordship to resign the office of Lord Chamberlain of His Majesty's Household.[2]

Much comment was occasioned by Wellesley's resignation, and the reason underlying it was canvassed in all companies interested in political affairs. Why Wellesley retired from the Ministry is explained clearly in the following letters, but at the time the matter was complicated by the Duke of Cumberland misunderstanding a conversation he had with Wellesley on the subject. The

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 260.
[2] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 261.

subject was dealt with in *The Times* of May 15 in the course of a leader on Irish affairs :

"We have to announce that the Marquess Wellesley, the last Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland but one before Lord Mulgrave, the Whig Lord-Lieutenant under Lord Grey and Lord Melbourne, has resigned his office of Lord Chamberlain. On being asked yesterday if the report was true, the noble Marquess, we have reason to believe, declared to this effect, 'That he had not resigned from any inability to perform the duties of the office, but because, if he retained it, he must support Lord Melbourne's administration, and this, as a man of honour, *he could not do*, it being evident to him that the Government of Ireland had been delegated by Lord Melbourne, or some *irresponsible* colleague of the noble Lord, into the hands of Mr. O'Connell.' We have received the above statement from such authority as entitles it to implicit credit."

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

Clarendon Hotel : May 15, 1835

Having by accident seen in *The Times* newspaper a paragraph, imputing to me, in very positive terms, a declaration (which I never have made, and never could make) of the grounds of my late resignation, I beg leave to assure your Lordship that the whole statement is absolutely groundless. How the fabrication has originated

I cannot imagine, as I answered nothing to any enquiry yesterday but that I had resigned, without assigning any motives for my conduct.

It is superfluous to state that the observations ascribed to me respecting Mr. O'Connell are entirely fictitious. Your Lordship's sentiments and mine having hitherto been the same on that subject—

"Neither to persecute, exclude, nor to be governed by Mr. O'Connell."

I have established for myself a rule never to notice any observations in newspapers, otherwise I would answer the paragraph to which I have referred.[1]

Viscount Melbourne *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Downing Street: May 15, 1835

I have received your letter with great satisfaction. When I read the statement in *The Times* newspaper this morning, I was at once convinced that it was a fabrication, and I have now, therefore, only to thank your Lordship for the readiness and alacrity with which you have enabled me to direct the statements to be contradicted. The manner in which you have done this, and the sentiments which you express, only add to my concern at your having withdrawn from the situation which you held in his Majesty's Household.[2]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 262.
[2] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 263.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY

Clarendon Hotel: May 24, 1835

I have received the honour of your Lordship's letter of the 23rd inst., which did not reach me until seven o'clock p.m., as I happened to be absent when it was delivered here.

Your Lordship may be assured that I should be as anxious as any of your numerous friends to repel with indignation any imputation on your Lordship of having advanced statements unfounded in facts to serve the purposes of party.

I am totally unconscious of having in any manner concerned myself in any proceeding relating to your Lordship, for whom I have ever entertained and manifested the most perfect respect. I was entirely ignorant of the paragraphs in the newspapers (to which you refer) until my attention was directed to them by your Lordship. I cannot be answerable for their contents, and I really do not comprehend their purport.

The matter which your Lordship proposes to bring before the House of Lords on Monday or Tuesday next does not appear to me to require my personal attendance, and I, therefore, request your Lordship to make such arrangements as may suit your convenience respecting the day of introducing the subject to their Lordships.

I am much obliged to your Lordship for your kind consideration in notifying your intentions to me, but as I have already stated to their Lordships all that appears to me to be proper relating to my

resignation, and as I have expressed my readiness to afford every facility within my power to any course of proceeding which may be regularly instituted in that matter, it is unnecessary for me at present to take any part in any discussion which may be revived on the subject. Your Lordship will recollect that the Lord Chamberlain is not a responsible Minister of the Crown, and that his resignation is not of the same nature as that of one of His Majesty's confidential advisers.

Under these circumstances I trust your Lordship will feel that my conduct on this occasion is founded on no disrespect or disregard towards your Lordship, but on a strict sense of public duty, and of submission to the rules and orders of Parliament.[1]

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Holderness House: May 25, 1835

I received your Lordship's letter of yesterday's date in the country, or would have replied to it sooner.

I fully concur with your Lordship in the opinion that, as the Lord Chamberlain is not a responsible Minister, your Lordship could not under *ordinary circumstances* be called upon to assign your reasons for your resignation of that office; but I feel persuaded when your Lordship considers the peculiar circumstances attending the present question, *viz.*, that His Royal Highness the Duke

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 423.

of Cumberland has communicated to his friends the reasons which you voluntarily gave to His Royal Highness at the Drawing-Room on the 14th inst. for your having resigned your office, and the statement made by Lord Melbourne, as Minister of the Crown, in his place in the House of Lords, that he had your Lordship's authority to give a contradiction to it; and, further, when your Lordship considers that imputations have been cast upon His Royal Highness and upon me of having been the authors of fabrications of such statements, your Lordship will at once perceive it will be impossible either for His Royal Highness or myself to abstain from a further investigation of this affair, and that the most clear, regular, and satisfactory mode of obtaining that object is by His Royal Highness and your Lordship giving me an opportunity in the presence of both of you, as well as in that of Lord Melbourne, of repeating the assertion, to which he had given a contradiction on your Lordship's alleged authority.

I have no party motive in this transaction. My sole desire is to free His Royal Highness and myself from the assertions which have been so publicly cast upon us. And I am sure your Lordship will not deny us the opportunity of so doing, in the simple mode that I suggest, and thereby *force* us to have recourse to a more circuitous, though I should hope not less efficacious, manner of justifying ourselves before the public.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 425.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY

Clarendon Hotel: May 25, 1835

I have received the honour of your lordship's letter of the 25th May, referring again to the question of my resignation of the office of Lord Chamberlain and to the discussions which have passed on that subject.

The transaction in question (as far as I am concerned) is very plain and clear, and nothing could have been more remote from my mind than any notion of involving your Lordship's name, or that of His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, in this matter.

By accident I saw in *The Times* newspaper a paragraph which contained an erroneous statement of the cause of my resignation of the office of Lord Chamberlain.

That paragraph makes no mention of the name of any authority from which it was derived. Without the least knowledge or even conjecture of the name of the author, and least of all imagining that it could proceed from His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland, I wrote to Lord Melbourne and noticed the error which the paragraph contained. The paragraph states that I "resigned because it was evident to me that the Government of Ireland had been delegated by Lord Melbourne (or through some *irresponsible* colleague of that Lord) into the hands of Mr. O'Connell."

These are the words attributed to me by the newspapers. His Royal Highness has not favoured me with any communication, but my answer is

plain and distinct on the whole subject. It was morally impossible for me to have assigned any such cause for my resignation, because I believed that any such imputation on Lord Melbourne was unfounded, and because my resignation was utterly unconnected with any circumstances relating in the most remote degree to Mr. O'Connell, or to his supposed influence. These facts are well known to every person in my confidence, and the words imputed to me, or any similar sentiment, never have been heard to proceed from me by any of my friends.

In a desultory private conversation (held for about ten minutes in a crowded Drawing-Room, and while I was in actual attendance on His Majesty) I may have failed in conveying my meaning; but I could not have used the words or expressed the sentiments ascribed to me, because they not only contain what is untrue, but are totally dissimilar to the whole tenor of my opinions, and of the motives of my conduct. It is, however, far from my purpose to impute intentional misrepresentation to the Royal Personage, who seems to have misunderstood me. Such misunderstandings must frequently occur in hasty private intercourse, and especially in crowded assemblies, and above all during the ceremonies of Royal Courts. I have no doubt that the misunderstanding must have arisen from the combination of all these circumstances.

It is very unfortunate that His Royal Highness should not have condescended to make a previous intimation to me of his intention to publish my

private conversation. If he had graciously pursued that kind course, a moment of confidential explanation would have precluded all misinterpretation.

It is unnecessary to add that I am no party to any imputation on your Lordship; indeed, I cannot understand how you can be implicated in this affair, or how you can be touched by any of its results. This letter comprehends all that I can state on the subject, and it does not appear to me that I can make any further communication.[1]

H.R.H. The Duke of Cumberland *to* The Marquess Wellesley

St. James's Palace: May 26, 1835

Lord Londonderry having just communicated to me your Lordship's reply to his letter of yesterday, in which your Lordship declares that there has been a misconception or mistake on my part as to the conversation which took place at the Drawing-Room on Thursday the 14th, and that it was unfortunate that I had not made a previous intimation to you of my intention of publishing that conversation, I must positively deny the application of the word "publishing," if your Lordship supposes for one moment that I either authorised, or was in any manner privy to, the paragraph in the papers. But if by that word "publishing" you mean that I did relate the conversation to my friends, I have only to say *I certainly did*, and could not consider my so doing as a breach of confidence, as the conversation was

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 427.

not a private one, but passed openly at the Drawing-Room ; and as also I never had in my life the honour of any confidential communication with you, I considered what passed as your undisguised opinion, freely given and unasked for by me ; and, coinciding myself completely in what you said, I related it to some of my friends immediately.

When Lord Melbourne showed Lord Londonderry a letter from you declaring that you never had any difference of opinion on the subject of Ireland, and of managing Mr. O'Connell and the Government of Ireland, I thought it necessary to impart to Lord Melbourne the conversation that passed between your Lordship and myself ; and Lord Melbourne in his reply to me the next day particularly states " that it is unnecessary for him to say that he relies completely on what I stated of my recollection of the conversation, and does it with the more satisfaction as it differs but in a few words from the statement of your Lordship (these words on Ireland, which was under Mr. O'Connell), but that the rest of the conversation, as recollected by me, was entirely consonant with your Lordship's own declaration." It is impossible for me to suppose that Lord Melbourne did not communicate my letters to your Lordship, as your authority is expressly cited in it.

However, to make it quite certain, I even enclose you the copies of the correspondence, and I have only to add that I must positively maintain the accuracy of my recollection of the precise conversation which took place on the occasion alluded to.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 429.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CUMBERLAND

Clarendon Hotel: May 28, 1835

I have the honour of respectfully acknowledging Your Highness' communication of the 26th May, enclosing copies of Your Royal Highness' correspondence with Lord Melbourne, which I received yesterday (27th) in an open cover by the hands of Lieutenant-Colonel Shawe.

This is the first communication which I have had the honour to receive from Your Royal Highness on this subject, and it is stated to be written in consequence of my letter to Lord Londonderry of the 25th inst.

Lord Melbourne has not communicated to me directly or indirectly any part of Your Royal Highness' correspondence, nor even any intimation of its existence.

My letter of the 25th to Lord Londonderry cannot bear reference to any statement made by Your Royal Highness, as at the time of writing it I had not seen any such statement, although I had heard of its general purport.

Having now seen the statement contained in Your Royal Highness' letter to Lord Melbourne, I have no hesitation in confirming the accuracy of its general tenor, although it is impossible for me to speak positively to particular phrases used in a hasty conversation in a crowded Court.

With regard to the words *Ireland, which was under Mr. O'Connell,* I certainly could not have intended to use them with reference to the causes of my resignation; but it is very natural that Your Royal

Highness should have applied them to those causes, under all the circumstances of the conversation.

After having spoken a very few words respecting my resignation, I believe I proceeded to state some of my general principles respecting the government of Ireland, and especially the great principle of pursuing an even course, above the movement of parties and factions, and of those agitations which have placed Ireland under the government of Mr. O'Connell.

It appears that my general sentiments with regard to the condition and state of Ireland have been transferred to the supposed motives of my resignation. The distinction is obvious when deliberately considered, but it might easily escape observation in a desultory conversation.

It was never my intention to commit so disrespectful an act as to impute to Your Royal Highness the publication of a private conversation, in the newspapers; but I certainly did consider that the conversation with which Your Royal Highness was pleased to honour me was strictly of a private nature; otherwise I should have spoken with much more deliberation and attention to accuracy. However, on that point Your Royal Highness is a much more competent judge of the etiquette of the Court than I can pretend to be.

Whatever errors I may have committed in this transaction, I trust I shall be acquitted of any failure in those sentiments of sincere respect and humble duty with which I remain Your Royal Highness' faithful and devoted servant,

WELLESLEY.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 435.

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

South Street: May 30, 1835

His Royal Highness the Duke of Cumberland has communicated to me copies of two letters which have passed between His Royal Highness and your Lordship on the subject of the conversation at the Drawing-Room on the 14th inst. I perceive that in His Royal Highness' letter some allusion is made to having given my opinion upon the import of your Lordship's observations without having communicated with your Lordship upon the subject. It appeared to me to be unnecessary to trouble your Lordship upon the occasion, because I conceived myself to collect, from His Royal Highness' own statement, that he had misapprehended the application of your Lordship's remarks, and I am happy to find myself confirmed in this interpretation by your Lordship's authority.[1]

LORD MULGRAVE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Clarendon*

As I perceived by your manner to me that your Lordship was annoyed at something, and as I think it possible this may arise from my having accepted an appointment which your Lordship formerly held, without previously notifying the circumstance to you, I think it due to myself, as well as to those habits of confidential communication which your Lordship had on some previous occasions kindly invited, to state that so far was I

[1] Add. MSS. 37297 f. 439.

from seeking, desiring, or contemplating, up to the evening before, that appointment for myself, that in point of fact I was till then the medium of private communication with a friend of mine to whom the office was not offered, but suggested, whose acceptance of it would have placed it on a different footing, but whose appointment at the present moment would in my opinion have possessed many peculiar advantages.

As to myself, it is well known not to have been what I should most have wished, but I cheerfully accepted. It is the arrangement thought best by my friends, and I can assure you that no one will more sincerely rejoice at some post being, in the progress of the Ministers' formation, offered for your acceptance, agreeable to your Lordship and worthy of your high station in the popular party.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 286.

BOOK X

IN RETIREMENT. 1835-1842

BOOK X

IN RETIREMENT. 1835-1842

Wellesley's breach with Melbourne : An unsatisfactory explanation : Occupations after retirement : The Indian despatches : Brougham's review : The East India Company's compliment : Queen Victoria's accession : A further tribute from the East India Company : Wellesley's appreciation of Pitt : Politics and pastimes : The Etonian muse : Niceties of criticism : His interest in Eton : A review of his services to the Empire : An unworthy reward : His views on the policy of France : The Company's gratitude : Ill-health : Death.

IT had been a sore blow to Wellesley to be offered by Melbourne only a post in the Household; but he accepted it under the impression that he was serving the new Prime Minister. When, however, he saw that he was not consulted concerning the arrangement for the government of Ireland, he took umbrage, and he would have no more to do with the administration.

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

South Street: January 16, 1836

I have been for some time intending to write to you upon the occasion of the approaching session of Parliament, and I certainly should have fulfilled this intention, if I had not been prevented by

pressure of business and also by an access of indisposition. Your Lordship is well aware of the value which I, in common with the rest of the world, attach to your Lordship's constancy and support, and my anxiety to retain that advantage induces me to express to your Lordship my anxious hope that the principles upon which the King's Government has been lately conducted have been such as to merit your Lordship's approbation, and to obtain a continuance of that confidence with which we were manifestly honoured and strengthened during the last session of Parliament. The great personal respect, esteem, and regard which I entertain for your Lordship will greatly add to the satisfaction with which I shall receive a favourable reply.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

Private *Hurlingham, near Fulham*
January 19, 1836

Your Lordship's obliging letter of the 16th inst. having been addressed to Marble Hill, did not reach me until this afternoon, otherwise the peculiar kindness with which it is expressed would have been sooner acknowledged.

No supporter of the present Government has ever surpassed me in zeal for the great cause in which we have been so long united; and, I doubt not, your Lordship will readily acknowledge that I have made great sacrifices for that cause, and have

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 291.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., pinxt. *S. Freeman, sculpt.*

WILLIAM LAMB, 2ND VISCOUNT MELBOURNE

served it effectually on many occasions of severe trial.

It would be insincere to disguise from your Lordship that, in my judgment, my services have not been duly requited; and I must in candour add that some transactions, both in Ireland and Great Britain, appear to me to bear a character and spirit which must be prejudicial to the Established Constitution, and which menace the unity, strength, and general interests of the Empire.

It had been my intention previously to the meeting of Parliament to request the honour of an interview with your Lordship, for the purpose of receiving from you some explanation on all these subjects; and I now request you to appoint a time for that purpose, when I may have the honour either of waiting on you in South Street, or of receiving you here, any day at two o'clock.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* LADY WELLESLEY

Hurlingham: January 29, 1836

As your last letter affords little hope of your returning to me as soon as I had expected, I think it necessary to acquaint you in this manner with the result of Lord Melbourne's recent visit to this place.

To my great surprise I received the enclosed letter from Lord Melbourne.[2] You will observe his Lordship's inaccuracy in the direction, which furnishes an additional instance of his high

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 292.

[2] *See* previous letters.

qualifications for public office. His letter, however, was addressed with so specious an appearance of kindness and respect, that I did not hesitate to send the enclosed answer,[1] in which I signify my willingness to meet him, and to receive from him explanations: First, on the causes of my removal from the government of Ireland, and, secondly, on the attempts now in progress to destroy the Constitution in Church and State, and to break up the foundations of the Empire.

I thus apprised his Lordship of the matters on which I required explanation; the first related to my own personal honour in the highest degree, and the second to the encouragement afforded to persons whose mischievous intentions were now clearly and openly avowed. Here I intended to have required a full explanation of the apparent support given by His Majesty's Government to the designs of O'Connell and others. If, on either of these points, due satisfaction had not been afforded to me, it was my intention to have declared to Lord Melbourne that I could not continue to his Government the support which they had hitherto received from me.

Indeed, every principle of honour, duty to my King, and affection to my country, preclude the possibility of my aiding any Minister who does not in deeds, as well as mere words, repulse the principles avowed by O'Connell. It is not enough to disclaim those principles; they must be stigmatised, and punished by adequate force of law.

When Lord Melbourne came to me I opened

[1] *See* previous letters.

the subject by reminding him of the zeal and irreproachable honour with which I had supported Lord Grey and himself, and especially, with regard to himself, of the favours I had conferred on his family (Sir F. Lamb),[1] of the real attachment which I had always manifested towards him, and of the sacrifice I had made in resigning the government of Ireland. He admitted all this with an appearance of feeling. I then asked why I had been expelled from the Government of Ireland, on a late occasion ?

He immediately answered (in a very rough and vulgar manner, and in such language as I believe never was applied before by a person of his station to a person of mine), " You wrote an imprudent letter to Lord Grey. The moment I read that letter I determined that on the reconstruction of the Government of Ireland there must be *a general sweep*." These were his words. They incensed me to the highest degree. I replied that I did not submit to the charge ; that if I were placed in the same situation again I would act in the same manner, and that the letter in question, instead of an act of imprudence, was an act of absolute necessity, and of caution and prudence. That the cause of that letter was his Lordship's negligence in not having answered nor even acknowledged two very important despatches from me ; one

[1] Frederick James Lamb (1782-1853), third son of first Viscount Melbourne and brother of the Prime Minister, held many diplomatic posts, and at this time was Ambassador at the Court of Vienna. He was decorated G.C.B., 1827, and created Baron Beauvale, 1839. He succeeded as (third) Viscount Melbourne in 1848.

(which was printed) on the internal state of Ireland, the other, a private despatch, requesting instructions respecting the renewal of the Coercion Act, by which I might be enabled to draw my official letter on that subject in such a manner as to avoid all collision in the Cabinet. These important communications from me were never even noticed by his Lordship, much less answered. In this state I was left in complete ignorance of the opinions and proceedings of the Cabinet and of his Lordship, having received also no information from Mr. Littleton. At length I received a letter from Mr. Littleton, detailing at great length reasons of prudence respecting the temper of the House of Commons, which should induce the Government to relinquish certain clauses in the Coercion Act, unless I deemed those clauses absolutely essential to the safety of Ireland. Mr. Littleton requested that I would write to Lord Grey on the subject, which request I complied with, not being at that time informed that Lord Grey had already prepared a Bill and laid it before the Cabinet. Uninformed as I was, my letter to Lord Grey was an act of necessity and of caution. It did not in any degree insist on any point, but merely contained suggestions for Lord Grey's private consideration. It was no public document. If Lord Melbourne had noticed my former despatches, my letter to Lord Grey would never have been written. The occasion could not have occurred if Lord Melbourne had done his duty. I, therefore, so far from acquiescing under his Lordship's imputation of *imprudence*, or admitting that

I had committed any offence, charged *him* with having committed the offence of neglect of duty, in consequence of which all the subsequent mischief had arisen: "*You, my Lord, are the offender; I* am the *victim.*"

To this he could make no other answer than that he admitted that he had not either answered or acknowledged the despatches to which I referred; that I ought to have concluded *from his silence* that he approved the first despatch; and as to the private despatch, he could not answer it, because he did not know the opinions of the Cabinet.

I observed that still, in common propriety, he should have acknowledged the receipt of such important documents; that the common conclusion from his absolute silence on the first despatch (which contained such weighty matter) would be that he disapproved some part of it; one word of acknowledgment would have relieved me. Why did he not at least acknowledge the private despatch, and give me his *own* view, if he could not give that of the Cabinet, respecting the best way of proposing the renewal of the Coercion Act? But his Lordship now admitted that he left me in the dark on the whole subject.

"I contend, my Lord, that in this proceeding you neglected your duty, and I will maintain against your Lordship, before any authority, and before all of the highest authorities in this Empire, that in this transaction *I* am entirely innocent, and *you* are highly blamable.

"But, although the real *offender*, it appears that

you constituted yourself to be, not only the *judge*, but the arbitrary ruler of my fate. Without hearing my defence, without admitting me even to undergo a preliminary question before *your supreme authority* upon the *first view*, you, in *your own breast*, condemned the whole Government of Ireland to the punishment of '*a general sweep*,' in which *I* (poor *imprudent* wretch!) was to be swept off with the rest of the rubbish by your mighty hand. This is not the estimation in which I have been held, and, despite your Lordship, am still held by a gracious Sovereign and a just public. When you were my Chief Secretary in Ireland, when you were my ruler in Ireland, did your Lordship find me so *imprudent* that you deemed me unfit to be trusted with the government of Ireland?

"Here arises another view of the subject. I insist that the condemnation of my conduct respecting the letter to Lord Grey was unjust; but what followed? Did your Lordship announce the sentence (passed, it seems, in the recesses of your breast) to me? No; so far from it, that, on your appointment to the situation of Prime Minister, your first act was to request, most earnestly, that this imprudent creature, this weak wretch (!) would continue to hold the important office of Chief Governor of Ireland. Not long after, you sent the Home Secretary, Lord Duncannon, to consult with the oracle of *imprudence*, to drink the waters of *imprudence* at the fountain head, to frame, with the Captain-General of *imprudence*, all those important measures on which

you proposed to found the strength and glory of your Government in the approaching session of Parliament. Many important measures were framed under my express direction, and the utmost confidence (apparently) was placed in me. Not a breath then escaped your Lordship or your friends of my *imprudence*, although at that time, it is now evident, I was sentenced and doomed to destruction whenever the favourable opportunity should offer for the predetermined execution.

" Now came the sudden blow of your Lordship's expulsion with your whole party from office. What was my conduct in that crisis ? *Imprudent*, perhaps, but such as might have mitigated the severity of your secret sentence upon a criminal guilty of that horrible crime of imprudence. In this case the imprudence arose from a high sense of party honour. I resigned my high office when the grace of my King, and the respect of many of his new servants, might probably have permitted me to hold it. Through the whole of this period I received unbounded proofs of your Lordship's highest consideration and friendship. I arrived in London from Ireland, and was received by your Lordship and all your friends with the utmost cordiality. This continued throughout that whole time, from December 1834 down to the time when your Lordship was called by His Majesty to frame a new Government. I was admitted into all your councils, entrusted with all your views (except *one :* that of my ruin), and even (with that sole exception) your most secret arrangements were imparted to me. What confidence in a creature

destined to be swept away for his imprudence! At length, when your Lordship's appointment was known, I wrote to your Lordship tendering my services for the post which I had resigned in Ireland. *This letter your Lordship never answered, nor even acknowledged.* Lord Mulgrave's kissing hands was the only answer I received to my application for my restoration to the office which I had held without reproach, and had resigned from the purest motives of party honour.

"Now, I contend that my letter to Lord Grey did not justify any censure; it was an act of prudent caution, instead of imprudence. Even if it had been imprudence my subsequent services to your Lordship and to your party should have obliterated any such trivial charge. Where would your Lordship now be if every act of *your* imprudence were visited with such severity? But I ask again: Why was this sentence concealed from me? By what rule of good faith was this concealment to be justified, through such a long course of active confidence on your part, and of active confidential service on mine? You also thoroughly knew the deep and cruel injury you were inflicting; you knew that you were destroying the dearest and most long-cherished hopes of my honest and honourable ambition, and also that you were deeply wounding my interests, and ruining my fortune. I therefore assert that this punishment was unjust in principle, cruel and barbarous in extent, and inflicted with additional aggravation by the secrecy with which the intention was veiled, and by the sudden execution of a sentence long predetermined."

To this statement Lord Melbourne made no answer but *this*, with much faltering and confusion, "*Did you ever know such a resolution to be communicated to the object of it?* and if you thought yourself so ill-used, why did you accept the office of Lord Chamberlain?"

I answered, "I never read of, nor heard, nor witnessed *such* a resolution"; but I *insisted* that it ought to have been communicated to me before he asked me to accept the government of Ireland; before he allowed me to resign it; before he trusted me with such apparent confidence; before he received such important service from me; and at least before he appointed Lord Mulgrave. "With respect to accepting the office of Lord Chamberlain," I said, "I accepted it because his letter was so urgent that I feared, if I had declined it, I might have occasioned serious embarrassment to the Government at its formation."

He then said, "Why did you resign it?"

I replied, "Your Lordship has already answered that question. I resigned because I became acquainted with some of those circumstances which your Lordship has now avowed and defended. I found that the determination to remove me from Ireland had long been formed, and Lord Mulgrave designated, and I felt that my personal honour precluded me from holding any office under a Government which had treated me in such a manner." Some other remarks occurred, but not the slightest symptom of any regret on the part of Lord Melbourne, or of any feelings for my sufferings, much less of any desire of retribution. I

therefore closed the conversation here, and took leave of him nearly in these words, "My dear Lord, I should be sorry for any breach of our private friendship, but I can no longer act with your Lordship publicly. I am the victim of your Lordship's omission." I did not use as harsh a term as the occasion would have justified.

You perceive that Lord Melbourne's rude, unjust, and insulting imputation of imprudence, and his defence of the want of good faith towards me for nearly a year of apparent confidence, concealing the most hostile designs, gave the whole transaction a character and spirit so injurious to my personal honour that I could not hold any further intercourse with him without disgrace and ignominy. This is as nearly as I can recollect the substance of what passed.

How he could write such a letter to me with such intentions appears inconceivable; but I really believe that his whole conduct arises more from habitual indolence, carelessness, imbecility, and utter inaptitude for serious business than from positive depravity, or any active quality of the heart or understanding.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* LADY WELLESLEY

Hurlingham: January 30, 1836

The papers sent in this cover ought to have been sent yesterday. They are the letters from Lord Melbourne, 16th inst., 1836, and my answer, which led to our meeting, and the letter from his Lordship,

[1] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 52.

19th April, 1835, requesting me to accept an office in the Household.

In this letter you will observe that, instead of a *direct charge of imprudence*, it is only stated, in very moderate though rather obscure terms, "*in consequence of what passed last summer.*" The letter is full of respectful and even affectionate language, and the request is urged most earnestly, and almost *imploringly*. His Majesty's name is also used. How could I have supposed such a letter to conceal such a sentence as had then been passed on *my imprudence!*

In my letter of yesterday I should have observed that I asked, "Is Lord Grey a party to this transaction?" Lord Melbourne replied with marked eagerness, "Oh no! Lord Grey has nothing to do with it!" I said, "No, I am sure of that. Lord Grey is a man of strict honour!"

I send a copy of Lord Grey's speech on his resignation, in which you will remark the terms in which he speaks of this transaction, and of me.

You will observe that Lord Melbourne did not attempt to deny the charge of his neglect of duty in not answering my despatches and letters, but he attempted to state that I ought to have been satisfied with his silence, although some of those papers contained earnest requests for instructions, which were never furnished, nor the letters even acknowledged.

But on inspecting the correspondence, I find that his Lordship makes most humble and penitent apologies for his *indolence* (his own word), and admits that it placed me in the very difficulty of

which I complain. Yet he afterwards has the audacity to punish me for the difficulty which he had created. The letter of the 19th April, 1835, was written on the night after Lord Mulgrave had kissed hands, and you will see in it a most penitent excuse for neglect in not having noticed my tender of service sooner. This letter is the first notice Lord Melbourne took of that tender, at the distance of ten days.

There is no end to his negligences and inconsistencies. No member of either his first or second Cabinet knew anything of the matter, except Mulgrave. The truth is that the whole charge was a fabrication, to cover the iniquity of Mulgrave's appointment.

Melbourne said something of Brougham, when I observed, as I have often done, that Brougham's note was a mere trivial remark, which I should not have noticed at all had I not received the letter from Littleton.

P.S. This should be annexed to the letter sent yesterday.[1]

In spite of his retirement from active political life, he continued to take a keen and close interest in the affairs of the day and the policies of the parties on the different questions. His opinions, indeed, were much sought after and highly prized, particularly on those subjects on which he was especially qualified to speak, the administration of India and Ireland.

[1] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 60.

There were, however, other things to occupy his time. He had never lost his early interest in the classics, especially in Latin verse, which, a drudgery to some, had always been a pastime to him. He had a gift of easy versification in both Latin and English, and now he spent much time in the writing of odes and poems, some of which he published in a volume which he dedicated to Brougham.

The first years of his retirement were, however, taken up with a publication of a different nature.

EDWARD STIRLING[1] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

South Place, Knightsbridge: April 20, 1836

Having for some days hoped for an intimation from Mr. Montgomery that your Lordship had quite shaken off a bilious cold, by which it gave me much concern to hear that you had been lately affected, and that I might in consequence have the honour of paying my respects to you, I delayed, perhaps longer than I ought to have done, the gratification of returning your Lordship my warm acknowledgments for the splendid gift which Mr. Montgomery conveyed to me in your name, on the 10th inst., and for the kind and to me inestimable memorandum with which it was accompanied. It needed not such an additional and unperishing record of your Lordship's achievements as a

[1] Edward Stirling (1773-1847), a valued member of the staff of *The Times*, with which paper he was associated from 1811 until 1840.

statesman and a conqueror to confirm or vindicate in my own eyes those public tributes to your eminence in both characters, which it was the pride of my former days to render you. Still less did I require such an honourable and interesting testimony of your personal regard to reanimate those feelings of grateful attachment towards your Lordship which no time nor circumstance can efface or weaken.

I do earnestly trust, however, that, masterly as were the views and provident the combinations, and signal and memorable the results exhibited by this authentic narrative of the movements of a single mind, under difficulties altogether unexampled, India will not stand alone in her contribution to your Lordship's fame, as connected with the political history of Great Britain.

Spain and Ireland, I may be permitted to hope, will bear their respective parts. Spain, which I believe to have been actually saved by the development of your principles, and by a recourse, however tardy, I might almost say posthumous, to your originally neglected counsels; and Ireland, which, if lost irretrievably, has been so, I fear, by their frustration.

At all events, I would beseech your Lordship, do not be niggardly to your own renown. Give the world *all* that can, without wounding your sense of duty to the state, be promulgated.

The first dawn of upright and enlightened government in Ireland was opened by yourself. Your Lordship has administered that country amidst crises and during transitions which will

leave their marks upon our institutions for many ages. Very few, nevertheless, of those facts which constitute the "within-door" history of that important period are known or even guessed at by the nation. Yet are they indispensable to a clear understanding of the course of events, and of the relations of parties—above all, to a just appreciation of the embarrassments by which this government was beset, which means the merits of those by whom it was conducted. In this respect there is a large debt due to posterity, and it will soon begin to press.

But I have to apologise to your Lordship. I sat down to thank you, not to discuss with you, or importune you. Let the deep interest I take in the subject be my excuse for both.[1]

Wellesley was most desirous that there should be an adequate and permanent record of the work he had done as Governor-General, and he decided to publish a selection of his despatches. The selection was edited by Montgomery Martin, and the five volumes, which appeared during 1836 and 1837, were entitled, *The Despatches, Minutes, and Correspondence of the Marquess Wellesley, K.G., during his Administration in India.* Upon the appearance of the first volume Brougham at once made it the subject of an article in the *Edinburgh Review*.[2]

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 349.
[2] July 1836; vol. lxiii. pp. 537-559.

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private and confidential *Harrington, Spilsby*
July 13, 1836

I am desirous of mentioning a circumstance to you which may possibly have reached you, and in that case I trust you will accede to my request—*that it may go no further*. This is, indeed, one of my reasons for mentioning it. I have deemed it a duty of friendship, as well as a public duty, to write a paper upon your Indian administration, which is inserted in the *Edinburgh Review*. My unbounded admiration of the history of a real statesman disclosed in the volume published by Mr. Martin is already known to you, though I really hardly think when I last wrote that I expressed myself strongly enough. I was aware that if the subject were left in other hands, however well disposed, the chances were that one secret known to me might be unknown to them, namely—that when a friend is to be defended there is but one course, to admit nothing at all against him. In fact, you had better not defend him at all, for the enemy pounces upon the admission and that becomes conviction; the rest goes for nothing. You perceive that I am a little of old Jack Lee's opinion, who, when the judge said, "You admit *that*, Mr. Lee, I suppose," answered, "Admit! I never admitted anything in my life." Of course I am applying my doctrine only to such a case as the one in question, and such a country as we live in. When there is party against party and gross injustice—and nothing like justice will be done if one side affects the judge while the other plays

the advocate—to speak of a discussion of a political subject in the *Edinburgh Review* as anything else would be the grossest absurdity.

However, I must really add that I have seen absolutely nothing that I could have found fault with had I been ever so much disposed. I only state what is above written to excuse my breaking in, when I truly felt that from being out of the practice of such writing I was not likely to do it even tolerably well; and you will consequently find the disproportion extreme between the workmanship and the materials. Something came to my knowledge that made me suppose it possible Hatherton might have learnt the circumstance of my writing it, and my first reason for now troubling you, therefore, is to beg that it may be counted by you as a strict secret, and that if he happens to know it you should enjoin him to the same secrecy.

My other reason is this: You will find no reference—or but a very slight general one—to a more recent passage: I mean Ireland and the unprecedented treatment you have met with. I thought it (after much consideration) far better that everything should be avoided which might give a pretext for attack to the retainers of the Government, and that there might be a unanimous expression of the admiration which all must feel upon the main subject of the paper. The allusion to Ireland is, therefore, made very general, though I believe it is intelligible enough.

I expect daily to receive proof sheets, which I shall correct as carefully as I can, and if time is allowed shall send to you, in case there should be

any oversight as to names and dates. But it is not likely that there will be time, as the professor (who is editor since Lord Jeffrey quitted it) is in London unwell and is rather later in his publication than usual.[1]

Brougham's article on the *Despatches* was entirely eulogistic. It is impossible here to follow it in detail, but one passage may be quoted. " The consummate ability, the true statesmanlike views, the admirable combination of temper and firmness, the rare unison of patience with despatch, of vigour with perseverance, by which the formation and the execution of Lord Wellesley's plans were characterised, and by which their uniform and complete success was secured, have never been questioned by anyone at all acquainted with the subject ; and have indeed been amply recognised by the voice of his countrymen in Europe, as well as in India, " Brougham wrote, especially in regard to the period that ended with the capture of Seringapatam. " Although the contemporary events of the continental war were calculated to draw aside men's regards from the theatre, how splendid soever, of a remoter empire, the government of Lord Wellesley, and the exploits of the captains who served under him, were anxiously canvassed at a time when the French Revolution was shaking the thrones of our hemisphere, and

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 363.

the political fortunes of Napoleon were dawning after the tempest, whose fury they were to direct rather than allay ; nor is it to be doubted that even after passages occurred which created serious opposition to Lord Wellesley's views, and much of his public conduct had become the object of attack and defence by the adherents of conflicting political parties, there still prevailed a very general impression, both on the continent of Europe and in England itself, that in him we possessed the man whose genius, matured by long and varied experience of affairs, afforded the best chance of counteracting the vast plans of the French ruler."

It is not to be doubted that Wellesley, than whom no man hungered more for appreciation, was delighted by this article, and the cup of his pleasure was shortly to be filled by the news that the Directors of the East India Company had decided to issue copies of the *Despatches* to their servants at home and abroad. " To the eventful period of your Lordship's government the Court look back with feelings common to their countrymen," so ran the Chairman's letter to Wellesley ; " and anxious that the minds of their servants should be enlarged by the instruction to be derived from the accumulated experience of eminent statesmen, they felt it a duty to diffuse widely the means of consulting a work unfolding the principles upon which the supremacy of Britain in India was successfully manifested and enlarged,

under a combination of circumstances in the highest degree critical and difficult."

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SIR JAMES RIVETT CARNAC [1]

Hurlingham: October 20, 1836

I request you to accept my grateful acknowledgments for your obliging kindness in submitting my letter of the 27th of September to the Court of Directors with so much expedition and promptitude.

The reply, which you have transmitted to me under the authority of the Court, confers one of the highest and most acceptable honours which I have ever received in a long and eventful course of public service.

That the authentic record of the principles on which I acted, during the most critical and difficult emergency of the affairs of the British Empire in India, should be deemed by the Court of Directors to contain an instructive and useful lesson for their servants, is a testimony most glorious to the memory of my services. I receive this most distinguished mark of consideration with the warmest sense of its value, and with the most cordial sentiments of respectful gratitude.

The kind feelings which dictated the wish expressed by the Court at the close of your letter are well calculated to revive early and ardent impressions of sincere zeal, attachment, and

[1] James Rivett Carnac (1785-1846) served the East India Company in India from 1801 to 1822, when he returned to England. He was created Baronet in 1836, in which and the following year he was Chairman of the Company. Subsequently, 1838 to 1841, he was Governor of Bombay.

affection. To whatever period of time my days may be extended, I can never forget my duty towards the East India Company.

I assure you that the favour of the Court receives additional value in my estimation from being communicated to me through a channel so justly respected and esteemed in India, as well as in the United Kingdom.[1]

VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Richmond Park: December 14, 1836

At the moment when your packet arrived, a friend who was with me was speaking with admiration and delight of the justice, the noble and splendid justice, which you had rendered to the memory of Pitt.[2] To have had such an opportunity of performing such a task will be to you a subject of the most cheering reflection to the latest period of your life.

You are not, I fear, to be induced to renew your acquaintance with the "Pectoral Claret." If you are, I shall rejoice to see you at my family dinner at half-past six on Friday next; if otherwise, I shall hope for the pleasure of receiving you between two and three on that day.[3]

THE DUKE OF BUCKINGHAM AND CHANDOS *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Avington: December 22, 1836

An attack of gout must plead my excuse for not

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 383.
[2] *See ante*, vol. i. p. 190.
[3] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 392.

having sooner answered your very kind letter, and also for now employing another hand than my own.

I read with the greatest admiration and pleasure your letter to Mr. Croker in vindication of the character of the late Mr. Pitt, and I feel deeply obliged for sending me a copy of it ; it is the fate of many illustrious characters to have their public services rewarded by ingratitude, and even Mr. Pitt's character is at the mercy of a convicted libeller.

It is a great gratification and comfort to his family and those who were attached to him to see the libel triumphantly exposed by one of his earliest and warmest friends, in a manner so eloquent and beautifully expressed.

The letter is a monument of your Lordship's excellent heart and feeling, as well as of Mr. Pitt's public virtue and private character.

Your Lordship has also singularly obliged me by transmitting to me copies of the correspondence between you and the Court of Directors of the East India Company.

It was not necessary for that body to send printed copies of your *Despatches* to India, in order to recall to the recollections both of British and natives in that country your magnificent plans, your extraordinary combinations, and your splendid exertions by which you established in that quarter of the globe, and in one of the proudest pages of English history, the glory of the British name.

It gives me sincere pleasure that you condescend to recollect with satisfaction the feeble exertions

which I was enabled to make in Parliament, in humble but heartfelt vindication of your measures.

Be assured, my dear Lord, that I look back with the greatest satisfaction to that portion of my political exertions.[1]

THE EARL OF CLARENDON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

North Audley Street : December 22, 1836

I cannot sufficiently express how much I am gratified and flattered by your letter, and by being thought worthy of receiving from yourself a copy of your able and eloquent defence of our illustrious friend [Pitt].

As a portrait painter you have mixed some of the finest traits of Sir Joshua with the characteristic and delightful delineations of Wilkie.

The partial opinion and confidence of Mr. Pitt, which I so long enjoyed, has certainly been the greatest honour of my life ; and my intimate knowledge of his sentiments enables me to record how strongly the impressions on his mind which your earliest reputation had created were confirmed and increased by every subsequent year's experience of your honour, talents, and public services. It is matter of no small praise and delight to see those talents so kindly, ably, and justly employed in his posthumous defence.

To do justice to the effective tribute which you have rendered to Mr. Pitt's memory would require a mind and pen equal to those from whence that tribute has proceeded.

[1] Add MSS. 37311 f. 399.

I shall certainly make no such pretension, nor shall I enter more into your composition than to gratify myself in making one or two observations upon it.

You brilliantly dispel the foul vapours with which malice, ignorance, and mischievous views still strive to malign the real character of one of the noblest and best of men, and you have contrived (while pursuing that object) in Mr. Pitt's remarkable praise of the Duke of Wellington to give the only new honours which the military honours of your illustrious brother were capable of receiving. In truth, the concentration of thought, and the apparent lightness and ease of expression in Mr. Pitt's remark, is not among the least striking instances of his familiar as well as his public eloquence.

You gratify me much by recalling to my mind the intimate knowledge which I had of Mr. Pitt's mind. I never availed myself of that knowledge with more confidence, nor with more success, than on an occasion to which perhaps to this hour you are a stranger. When your conduct in India was grossly attacked, party spirit, ignorance, and malice joining the attack, the Court of Directors highly offended, and the Board of Control at last wavering in its sentiments, Lord Maryborough (then Mr. Pole) came to me, and in all the warmth, I might say agony, of his brotherly feelings, condescended to ask me what he could do. I told him instantly, " Go to Mr. Pitt " (though at that time they were barely acquainted), " tell him your whole case, and leave to him, unasked, to decide

what is due to such a Minister as the Governor-General zealously engaged in the most critical and arduous services, absent, and at a great distance."

I *knew* the reception which he would meet with, but I had not the smallest share in what passed, beyond the mere use of that knowledge. The result was everything which could be wished, and the effect at the time important to yourself, and, through you, to the Empire, inasmuch as it tended to prolong your brilliant and able administration in India.

It would be most pleasing to discuss many similar traits of our deceased friend's character with one who feels as you do towards his merits and his memory ; but I must not intrude further upon you. Pray excuse what I have already done, and believe me to be, with all the sentiments which this letter implies, and with sincere regard and attachment . . . .[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* LORD BROUGHAM

Hurlingham : February 10, 1837

Your Lordship will not be surprised to find that the disclosures made in the House of Commons, and the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers towards me, have determined me to relinquish all connection with them, and to hold myself at liberty to act against them in Parliament.

Their existence as a Government is now the shield of protection to the champions of revolution, and their whole mismanagement in Ireland is entirely contrary to my public principles. On

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 401.

these grounds I quit them. My personal wrongs are not of a private nature. They involve public offences of a deep dye, and constitute public objections which render it impossible for me to act with the *wrong-doers*. But, in addition to my personal feelings, it is my sincere opinion that the continuance of the present Ministry in power must produce confusion, if not ruin, to this Empire.

It appeared to me to be my positive duty to communicate my determination to your Lordship before I made it known to any other person, and I hope you will receive this communication as a testimony of that sincere respect and esteem, and of those warm sentiments of friendship and attachment, with which I shall ever remain. . . .

I do not feel it necessary to make my communication to Lord Melbourne.[1]

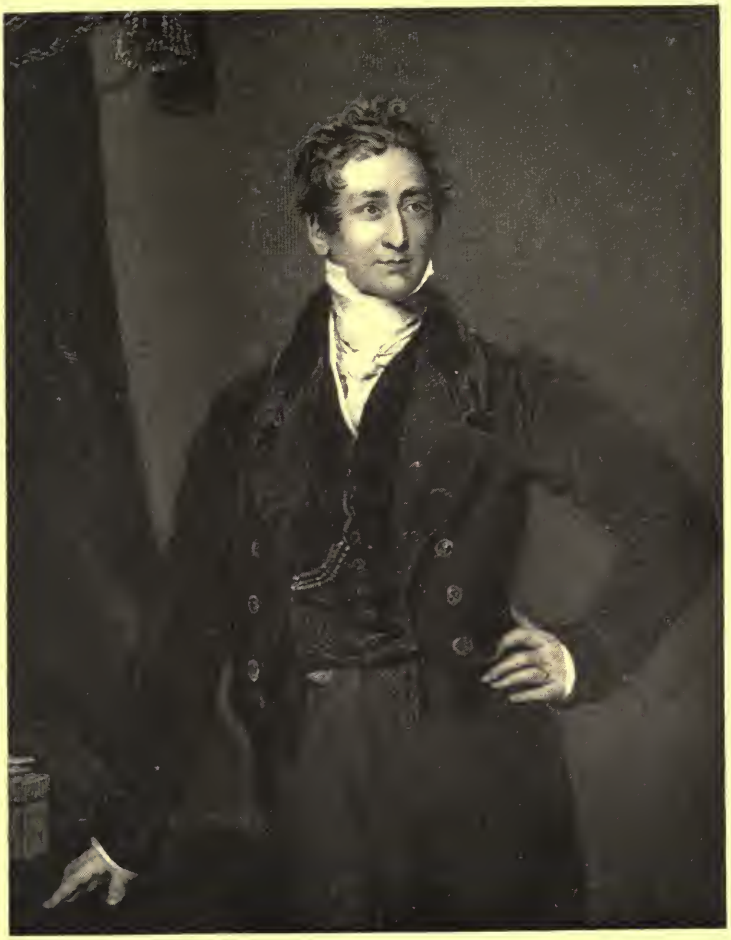
THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SIR ROBERT PEEL

Private *Hurlingham: February* 10, 1837

As you have been so kind as to accept the former volume of my Indian Despatches, I now send you the second and third volumes. The second contains papers relative to the foundation of the college of Fort William, the third the history of the Marátha war.

I cannot forward these books without expressing to you the very great satisfaction which I derived from reading your very able speeches at Glasgow. The inaugural speech greatly interested me. It should be placed in the hands of every young

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 436.



Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A., pinxt. *J. Cochran, sculpt.*

SIR ROBERT PEEL, BT.

man. You may well believe with what pleasure I remarked your ardours in recommendation of classical literature, now so much descried in despite of all reason and experience. Any person but yourself would have cited your own example as the most prominent of our age. I am happy to have contributed my mite to your examples of the past age, and I am deeply sensible of the kindness with which you mentioned me. The speech in the Grand Temple at the banquet (which I trust will prove the "Feast for Persia won") is admirable. In all the great principles I agree completely with you, especially in considering the Protestant establishment of the united realm as the great bulwark, not merely of our religion, but of our liberties and laws. This was always my sentiment, as you will find in a speech delivered so long ago as the 31st January, 1812 (see Hansard's Debates); my sentiment was deliberately uttered, and printed under my revision.

My view was never to admit the Roman Catholics to any right, otherwise than under the Protestant constitution of the realm. Judge then with what horror I find Government countenancing the utter demolition of the Protestant establishment in Ireland, as the necessary consequence of the Act of Relief!

The disclosures made in the last debate, and the full display of the deeds of Grizzle and his master (although highly amusing) are most alarming. It is now quite evident that the present system (if so it can be called that "shape has none") serves merely as a protection to the

mining party, who carry on the work most regularly, and will finish it most successfully, unless the *protecting guard* be forced by a vigorous sortie from the citadel. The scene in Ireland surpasses any passage in *Yes and No*. It is folly and vanity mutually offering incense to each other, and then kneeling together in joint adoration at the bloody shrine of O'Connell.

There were some mistakes made in the debate respecting Janus Vitalis. He was not an old monkish writer, but a favourite (I believe secretary) of Pope Leo X. His poem on the "Ruins of Rome" is printed in a Westminster school book, containing a selection from Martial, Claudian, etc. I read it at Eton. You must not judge him from Lord Holland's quotation of a very bad line. He wrote some noble verses. You may quote these *on your next visit to Rome:*

Aspice murorum moles, praeruptaque saxa,
Obrutaque horrenti vasta theatra situ!
Haec sunt Roma—vidên, velut ipsa cadavera tanta
Urbis adhuc spirent imperiosa minas.[1]

Sir Robert Peel *to* The Marquess Wellesley

Whitehall: February 11, 1837

I feel very much flattered by the communication which I had the satisfaction of receiving from you yesterday.

The two volumes of correspondence are not transmitted by you to one indifferent to their contents or insensible of their value, for I read the

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 438.

first of the series with the greatest care, and need scarcely add that it was with the utmost satisfaction that I hailed the arrival of its successors.

I rejoice that you have given to the people of this country such materials for faithful history, and such lessons of enlightened and successful policy in the government of her Indian Empire.

Your kind approbation of my Glasgow addresses is very gratifying.

I can with perfect truth assure you that the more attractive part of my exhortation to my youthful constituents was your beautiful testimony to the classical acquirements and refined taste of Mr. Pitt.

We are all bewildered by our debate in the House of Commons, and can only account for the diversion made by Lord John Russell from the proper subjects of discussion on the assumption that he was not apprised of the freaks committed by them in authority in Ireland. The "Lamentations and Woe" of Sir John Hobhouse could only be justified by the prospect of immediate dissolution; and the very different language held by Lord John Russell from that held by Lord Melbourne in the Lords was very remarkable. I should have inferred from it that His Majesty's Government was more familiar with *Janus Bifrons* than *Janus Vitalis*. I was not aware that the *Poet* was capable of four such lines as those quoted in the postscript of your letter.

They are a fine funeral oration on the departed splendour of Rome, and reminded me, by the force of contrast, of Ovid's commemoration of its infancy.

Frondibus ornabant, quae nunc Capitolia, gemmis,
Pascebatque suas ipse Senator oves.
Nec pudor in stipulâ placidam cepisse quietem,
Et foenum capiti supposuisse, fuit.

When I was trying to find a justification for Lord Mulgrave in the precedent of Tom Thumb, I was wholly unaware of the important fact that it is one of his Lordship's favourite characters in which he is eminently successful in private theatricals. This clearly brings it home to him.[1]

The Marquess Wellesley *to* Viscount Melbourne

Hurlingham, Fulham: June 21, 1837

The affecting circumstances under which our young Queen has been called to the throne must excite the strongest interest in every heart attached to our Monarchy and Constitution. In such a crisis every loyal subject should forget private and personal wrongs and should fix his mind on the obligations of duty towards his Sovereign and towards the public safety.

Her Majesty's declaration to the Privy Council, in my opinion, is admirable, and must inspire general confidence. Her Majesty's Government, founded, as it must be, on the principles of that declaration, demands cordial and steady support.

Casting away, therefore, from my mind all remembrance of former injustice or injury (however severely I may suffer under their pressure), I renew to your Lordship my sincere assurances of hearty support to the Government, and accord-

[1] Add. MSS. 37311 f. 440.

ingly I shall take my seat in the House of Lords at the earliest opportunity. I request your Lordship to mention in whose hands my proxy shall be placed; Lord Lansdowne hitherto has had the kindness to take that charge.[1]

VISCOUNT MELBOURNE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

South Street: June 22, 1837

I have hardly time to write, but I cannot for a moment delay expressing the very great satisfaction with which I have received your letter. I will not enter into the past; but I assure you that I am deeply touched by the rectitude and generosity of the feelings which have actuated you upon the present occasion.[2]

JOSEPH HUME[3] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Bryanston Square: June 29, 1837

I beg to offer your Lordship my best thanks for the copy of your Indian Correspondence, which you have been so obliging as to send me.

I shall peruse with great interest these memorials of that eventful period when the destinies of the Indian Empire were in your hands; and, having had the honour to serve in the Marátha war for several years of the time to which your correspondence relates, I can the better appreciate the

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 7.

[2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 9.

[3] Joseph Hume (1777-1855) served the East India Company from 1797 until 1807. He entered Parliament in 1812 in the Radical interest, and was a staunch supporter of a programme of economy and retrenchment.

principle of policy which regulated your Lordship's government.

Allow me to add that it must be highly satisfactory to you to find that the judicious policy which you adopted towards the Native Powers, and which, after Lord Cornwallis' arrival had been objected to, and altered, has after twenty years of fruitless negotiation and unsuccessful experiment been again resorted to, and acknowledged to be the best calculated to promote the British interests, as well as the peace and prosperity of the natives.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *St. Leonards: October* 3, 1837

I have been reading with the greatest interest and delight the third volume, and I am strongly minded to send a few pages upon it to the *Edinburgh Review*. But I believe there is only a day or two left in which to do so. Therefore I beg of you to give me a note or memorandum, by return of the post, of what the Company (Behauder) did last winter, which should be stated (though certainly not in terms) as a kind of *amende honorable*. I have only a vague recollection, which I do not like to print, and I beg you to state precisely what you think ought to be mentioned.

I cannot express to you how entirely I go along with you in the whole question. I declare that "drivelling" would have been too light a term for the conduct of him who could have hesitated. Indeed, self-defence *almost* to the letter and in the

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 11.

particular instances (on the larger scale and in the long run *altogether*) is a perfectly tenable ground after the Biron villain and the Scindiah creature had come so near the Peshwa ass, and were ogling and ogled by old Holkar. But the Perron affair reminds me of the great Mysore year, only I can not help suspecting M. P[erron] had a bridge of gold personall (*sic*) one way or other.[1]

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Foreign Office: October 11, 1837

I am extremely obliged to you for having had the goodness to send me the remaining volumes of your Indian Despatches. That highly interesting work will acquire an additional value to me from being a memorial of your kind recollection of me.

I have desired that your Spanish Despatches should be collected together that I may look over them, in order to be able to answer your question respecting them; but I confess to you that I should fear that confidential despatches of so recent a period from an Ambassador to a Secretary of State could scarcely be published without considerable public inconvenience.[2]

The East India Company was now given an opportunity to show, albeit belatedly, their appreciation of the value of the work done by Wellesley during the years he was in their service, and it is pleasant to be able to record that they

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 37.
[2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 41.

availed themselves of this. At a Court of Directors held on October 18, 1837, it was resolved:

"The Court having learned with deep regret that the Marquess Wellesley is involved in pecuniary difficulties which greatly interrupt his personal comfort in the decline of life, have been led to review his Lordship's career in India with the view of considering whether it would not become the Company to offer some further acknowledgment of the distinguished services of that illustrious individual.

"The Court observe that upon the fall of Seringapatam, an intention was entertained of appropriating from the value of the Military Stores captured there a sum of £100,000 to the Marquess Wellesley, which intention was abandoned on his Lordship's own suggestion from motives of delicacy towards the army, and it was then determined by the Company to grant to the Marquess an annuity of £5,000, which is still paid, but in which there is too much reason to apprehend that his Lordship has very little, if any, beneficial interest.

"After the fall of Seringapatam Lord Wellesley continued to hold for several years the office of Governor-General, and during that period military operations were conducted upon an extensive scale, and with brilliant success and diplomatic arrangements were concluded, upon which the maintenance and consolidation of the British power in India have since essentially depended.

"In reference to the important services of the noble Marquess and to his present circumstances, the Court of Directors do by the Ballot resolve that, subject to the approbation of the General Court of Proprietors and the Board of Commissioners for the Affairs of India, the sum of £20,000 be vested in the Chairman, Deputy Chairman, and two other persons, to be named by the Court of Directors as trustees, to be applied to the benefit of the Marquess Wellesley in such mode as shall appear to them to be best calculated to promote his Lordship's welfare."

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* ALFRED MONTGOMERY

October 18, 1837

This day a most handsome resolution and a grant of £20,000 were passed by a great majority of the Court of Directors. They have summoned a Court of Proprietors for the 1st November, where they have no doubt of success.

The few who did not approve the grant acknowledged "the eminent merits of the whole of my most brilliant administration," and called me "the modern founder of the British Empire in India." [1]

THOMAS CREEVEY *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Brooks's Club, St. James's Street

October 27, 1837

I beg your Lordship will permit me to offer you

[1] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 72.

my sincere congratulations upon what I understand has recently taken place at the India House.

It must always be agreeable to public men to be gratefully remembered by their country, but the homage then offered to your Lordship's Indian government after so long an interval of time, when its beneficial consequences can no longer be matters of opinion, but are confirmed by experience and admitted by those whose interests were the most immediately and deeply involved in it, is perfectly invaluable, and it makes the conclusion of your Lordship's connection with the East India Company as honourable to that body as it must be gratifying to the feelings of your Lordship.

I have read with very great pleasure the three first volumes of your Lordship's *History* of India (for such in truth it may be called), and I was particularly gratified on hearing from Maryborough the other day at Brighton that your Lordship most kindly intended to send me a copy of it. I need not say with what pleasure I shall receive and preserve so invaluable a present from your Lordship's own hands.

Before I conclude I must touch upon one other subject, though a more unworthy one. I mean *myself*. My conduct to your Lordship in never having paid my respects to you since I had the pleasure of seeing you in Ireland has been that of a *brute*, and yet a most inconsistent one, for I have never ceased to feel and to express to others the great obligations I owed you for your signal kindness to me when in Ireland, and for the

sincere pleasure I enjoyed from being permitted to partake of your Lordship's society.

May I request your Lordship to present my respectful compliments to Lady Wellesley ? [1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THOMAS CREEVEY

Hurlingham House, Fulham
October 28, 1837

In returning my grateful thanks for your very kind congratulations, I trust you will believe that I fully appreciate their value. You are not of that sect of philologists who hold the use of language to be the concealment of thought, nor of that tribe of thinkers whose thoughts require concealment. You would not congratulate me on the occasion of any false honour, the result of prejudice or error, or of the passionate caprice of party, or of idle vanity, or of any transient effusion of the folly of the present hour; but you think the deliberate approbation of my government in India declared by the Court of Directors (after the lapse of thirty years, after full experience of consequences and results, and after full knowledge of all my motives, objects and principles) a just cause of satisfaction to me. . . . In truth, they have awarded to me an inestimable meed of honour, which has healed much deep sorrow, and which will render the close of a long public life not only tranquil and happy, but bright and glorious. . . .[2]

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 53.

[2] *Creevey Papers*, ii. 327. By kind permission of Mr. John Murray.

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *St. Leonards: October*, 1837

I am extremely obliged to you for the promptitude with which you answered my letter, and the books you sent. In fact, when I came to grapple with the subject I had been reading so much upon, and found I had only four or five hours to do what should have taken as many weeks, I should have given it up in despair but for these books coming to my relief. You will ask how an increase of the materials could shorten the labour? As thus: I had found anything but a mere reference to the subject out of the question, and those invaluable documents, Castlereagh's observation and the Duke's answer, which I set to reading immediately, enabled me to give something like a notice of the question as to the Basseim Treaty, to which I added a few sentences upon the going to war with Sindia.

I assure you nothing can be worse or less satisfactory than the whole is, and I am beyond measure provoked at the accident by which I mistook the time by a month, so that this is the very last post by which I could transmit what I had to say. Something I was determined should be done, and accordingly I have despatched it by this post. However, when I see what a field there was for an ample discussion worthy of the subject, and when I find such rich materials in the fifth volume, I really have a doubt if I had not better have postponed it in order to do justice to the question. That would, indeed, be a delay of

three months, and I might be interrupted by Parliament. I have, therefore, resolved upon sending the miserable stuff which alone I could throw together, writing literally as hard as I could, "to save the post," and to let you decide whether it shall stand as it does or be countermanded by Saturday's post. I have made a point in my letter to the professor (who is the editor) of his inserting it how late soever it may reach him, and have dropped no hint of even the possibility of a countermand. But if you shall so determine, I dare to say there will be time on my receiving your answer to this.

In order to enable you to make up your mind, I shall briefly give the outline of what I have sent and which may occupy about six pages. It is indeed meagre enough.

After compliments there is a very distinct statement of the East India House orders, and a quotation of the proper passages from the circular and from the letter of the Chairs. There is then a reference to the Tipu correspondence with the "citizens" and the Grand Signor. Then a reference to Castlereagh's observation and the Duke's answer, then to the cause of war and Sindia's "We shall then know whether it is to be peace or war." In passing I have done justice to Castlereagh, who behaved well, and I may say ably; this paper does him considerable credit, though he is so entirely wrong that it hardly required so very excellent an answer as the Duke's to make "minced meat" of him. I have then made, I think, a very proper and most just

reference to Lord Sidmouth's conduct, and also to his general character for *boldness*, which I am sure he had beyond most political men. This would have entirely escaped me but for your letter, but I feel his whole behaviour to your Lordship to have been admirable, and he would not be justly dealt by were this not acknowledged. As for General Lake, I never felt more admiration, and I may say regard, for anyone I have read of, than the whole of his action and his letters have given me for him ; and there is no one now (as far as I know) at all related to him who can look after his fame. I should, therefore, even if you had not mentioned him, have done my best to render him some little justice. This I have done, I think in a way to avoid giving the least offence in the other quarter. It closes with some expression of regret that several things are omitted, as suttees—sacrifices —etc., and a mention of your great care and love for the arts of peace, and a reference to the expected *European* Despatches.

Now, counting that all this was most rapidly thrown upon paper between *four and six* o'clock, the perusal of the necessary parts of Volume V. having taken from morning to four o'clock, it is hardly necessary to say how scanty and superficial the whole is. But unless I hear to the contrary by Saturday's post it will go on. Even should I then find your Lordship prefers the delay, it *may* be too late to countermand it, but I shall try.

I was much touched with again reading Pitt's letter in Volume V.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 61.

THE EARL OF CLARENDON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Leamington: November 3, 1837

I heard at Beaudesart (where I assure you the gratifying intelligence had been received with cordial satisfaction) of the just honours paid you by the Court of Directors, and I only waited with my congratulations till their tribute of gratitude and praise should be completed by the general assent and concurrence of those who have now shown the sense they entertain of such services as yours to the Empire and to themselves.

It is most rare to see public gratitude and public justice awakened, after much injustice and long insensibility. But it is a spectacle highly gratifying whenever it does occur, and not the less so from the proof it affords how great must have been the merit which has had the power within itself of working such an effect. Pray accept my humble but most sincere congratulations, and believe me to be, with every sentiment of regard, as well as with just admiration of the services to which this letter refers . . .

P.S. Lady Clarendon charges me to offer you her congratulations and to assure you of the pleasure which she has had in the event which has taken place.[1]

SIR JAMES RIVETT CARNAC *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

East India House: January 4, 1838

As one of the trustees of the grant recently made

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 71.

by the East India Company in testimony of its sense of the benefits derived from your Lordship's administration in India, I have the honour of informing you that in pursuance of the resolution under which the grant was made, the sum of £20,000 was invested in the three per cent. Reduced Annuities; that a sum sufficient to purchase an annuity for your Lordship's life of £3,650 per annum has been transferred to the Commissioners for the Redemption of the National Debt, and that an annuity of the amount and for the period above named has accordingly been granted to the trustees, payable half-yearly. The first payment will fall due on the 5th of April next.

Your Lordship will believe that the trustees derive great satisfaction from the completion of the transaction, upon which they beg to offer their hearty congratulations and to express their ardent hope that your Lordship may long enjoy the provision tendered by public gratitude as an acknowledgment of eminent public service.

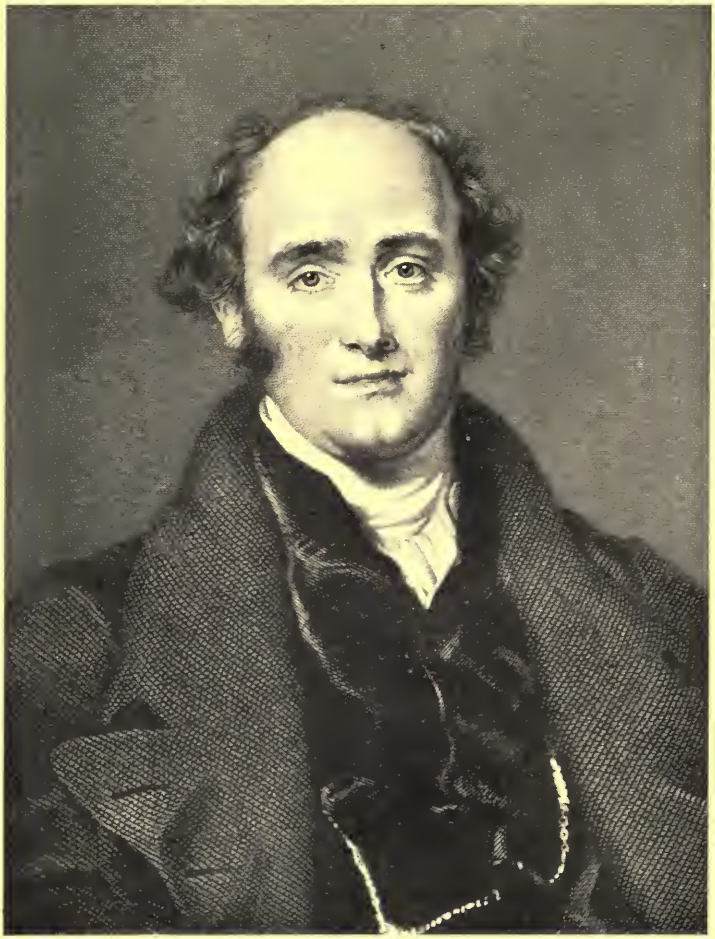
After making the necessary payment for the purchase of the annuity there remained unappropriated a sum of £801 9s. 9d., for which I have the honour of enclosing a draft.[1]

JOHN WILSON CROKER *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

West Moulsey, Surrey: April 5, 1838

I trust your Lordship may be inclined to excuse my desire to avail myself of an opportunity of renewing our literary correspondence, which has

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 105.



Sir T. Lawrence, pinxt.

JOHN WILSON CROKER
By permission of Mr. John Murray

already done me honour and never can fail to give me pleasure.

I have been lately looking into the collection of political *jeux d'esprit*, commonly called the *Rolliad*, and have been very much struck, not merely with the elegance of the versification and the poignancy of the wit, but with, what the authors never expected, the honour that is done to the memory and policy of Mr. Pitt and his friends. For instance, Mr. Pitt is ridiculed and censured for having confided an important trust to a fat-headed and fat-rumped youth to the exclusion of the matured talents of a distinguished man nominated by Mr. Fox. The clumsy youth was Lord Grenville —*clarum et venerabile nomen gentibus;* the rejected statesman was one Fletcher,[1] of whom nothing is remembered but that Fox made him a baronet.

But in looking through this volume I was vexed to find how much of it is become obscure, and I have been endeavouring by marginal notes to catch what straws I can from the oblivious stream of time. Your Lordship and Lord Clarendon are now, I believe, the only contemporaries left, and it has occurred to me that you might be willing to help me with some of your reminiscences. I have no thoughts of *publishing* an annotated edition, but I should like to prepare one for my own better amusement and that of my friends, and for the sake of doing justice to the wit of *that* party and to the characters of ours—for I presume to call myself an humble and far distant follower of Mr. Pitt.

[1] Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart. (1727-1807), for eighteen years a director of the East India Company.

I was too far removed in station as well as age to know anything prior to 1795; but you were already distinguished both by Mr. Pitt's friendship and the enmity of his opponents; so that if you chose to amuse an occasional hour in that way you could probably explain all that is worth explaining. How say you, my Lord, content or not content?

I greatly regret not to have obtained from my old friend, Lord John Townshend, the authorship of the several pieces. He once told me that he was the author of *Jekyl*, and Jekyl himself confirmed it; and both assigned to General Fitzpatrick a large share in the poetical compositions. I cannot say that I ever admired the *Preliminary Odes* so much as the verse of the *Rolliad* and the *Prologues*, which I understood were almost entirely the General's and Lord John's.

I suppose there must be some of that party, Lord Holland, for instance, who could assign the authorship; yet Lord Devon, who was likely to have access to such information, told me that *he* had failed to do so. He and I had agreed to try what I now venture to propose to your Lordship; but he died suddenly, and the project with him. I have a mind to do something of the kind, ere it is too late, for, if I may be forgiven for saying so, on so trifling a subject, νυξ γαρ ἐρχεται.[1]

JOHN WILSON CROKER *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

West Moulsey: April 25, 1838

I have to thank your Lordship for a very

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 112.

flattering letter. I *fear* that your kindness overmastered your judgment, or I should rather say I *hope*, for I should be more pleased at finding myself indebted to the former than even to the latter.

My *Rolliad* project would be the work, or rather the trifling, of a few half-hours. I could do it, indeed, in one morning, if I had my previous information ready; and shall probably do so *en attendant* the elucidation of what my own memory cannot explain.

But the hint in your Lordship's letter about a more complete development of the political characters of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville has very much struck me; but chiefly with an impression that no living hand could do it so well as your own. If you would again allow me to have the honour of *ringing the bell* to a discourse of yours on that text, I should be happy and proud to lend my humble assistance, and it has occurred to me that an opportunity now presents itself. Mr. Murray has sent your Lordship his new publication, the Life of Wilberforce. Could we not hang on that peg something better than the shreds and patches of morbid *pietastery* in which the injudicious biographers have disfigured their father, or, to speak more justly, allowed him to disfigure himself; or if you think that a canvas already so occupied would not afford space for two additional figures —*augustiores quam humanae formae*—could you not, at least, do for Lord Grenville what you did so beautifully and so piously for Mr. Pitt in the article on Wraxall?[1]

[1] *See ante*, vol. i. p. 190.

I have not yet read more than half the first volume, and have dipped loosely into the others, and I do not therefore know whether there be any very convenient opportunity for introducing a separate sketch of Lord Grenville ; but I take the liberty of suggesting the idea that in reading the book your Lordship might, if the thought pleases, look out for such an opening, and I would undertake to review the whole work, gladly, with the hope of setting such a gem in my ring. The book itself, as far as I can yet judge it, is really pitiable ; as the " devout exercises " of William Wilberforce it may be a very good and perhaps useful book, but as the *Life of the friend* of Pitt, Grenville, and the rest of you, it seems to me to be a miserable failure. But still, in reviewing it, one might and indeed ought to say a good deal of those great men, and as we on another occasion threw so splendid a wreath on Pitt's grave, I think we might now throw a chaplet on Lord Grenville's—perhaps not in the same form. That might seem tautologous —but a *sketch of Lord Grenville*, of a couple of pages, would not be displaced in any period of Wilberforce's history, but might, I suppose, be particularly well introduced at the point when in 1806-7 he carried the Abolition Bill.

I feel that I should be taking an unwarrantable liberty in making these suggestions to your Lordship if I had not the encouragement of your former co-operation and your recent advice on this very topic.

You alone of living men can say :

Ενθ' ἤτοι εἴως μὲν ἐγὼ καὶ ΔΙΟΣ 'Οδυσσεὺς
οὔτε πότ' εἰν ἀγορῇ δι χ' ἐβάσομεν, οὔτ' ἐνὶ βουλῇ,
ἀλλ' ἕνα θυμὸν ἔχοντε νόῳ καὶ ἐπίφρονι βουλῇ
Φραζόμεθ' 'Αργείοισιν ὅπως ὄχ' ἄριστα γένηται.

I wish I were a Telemachus to be able to profit by what you could tell me, but at least I may be able to record it for the use of others.[1]

John Wilson Croker *to* The Marquess Wellesley

50, *Albemarle Street: May* 29, 1838

You may perhaps wish to know what I have done about Wilberforce's Life, which I thought (before I had read it) might have been made the vehicle of some justice to the political lives of Mr. Pitt and Lord Grenville. On reading the work I found it wholly unfit for that purpose, and I have been obliged to confine myself to a *criticism on Wilberforce himself*, by which I have, I hope, extenuated much of the ill effect which his foolish and unjust *diaries* might produce against all his old friends. Indeed, I do not think that the profligate Sheridan or the caustic Francis could have written a more unfair and uncharitable account of you all than good, saintly friend Wilberforce.

I have had occasion to bring in on the interment of Wilberforce near Pitt, Fox, and Canning the beautiful quotation

εὕδει . . . . ἐγέρσιμον ὕπνον κ.τ.λ.

If you should have any idea of using it yourself I would strike it out, for it is undoubtedly *yours* more than Theocritus'. *You* gave it its sublime and Christian application, which is too admirable

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 118.

not to be preserved, but too valuable to be filched away, if you have any prospect of using it yourself.

If your Lordship had leisure and any curiosity to see how I have treated the subject of Wilberforce, I should be but too happy to submit the proofs to your inspection.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Colehill, Charing*
July 10, 1838

I rejoiced greatly to receive such excellent accounts by A[lfred] M[ontgomery] of your continued good health, and I only wish I could contribute in any degree to your amusement by any intelligence from this quarter. But nothing can be more barren of such than all my letters, except that from France I hear accounts which shake materially my confidence in the present storm blowing over. I still incline to think, *on the whole*, that it will, and that the war, which seems inevitable, will be postponed till some new occasion; but I confess that with such a strong popular feeling as exists there, and with all the preparations which it excites and enables the Government to make, the utmost difficulty exists to prevent them (the French mob) from having what they are so desirous of—a fight with somebody, it seems not to signify, in their estimation, with whom.

In the present state of things, and if the craving remains unsatisfied and keeps up the irritation, one can hardly be sure that an outbreak may not

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 120.

take place on some such occasion as Buonaparte's funeral so as to shake the Government.

Will you tell Alfred that my astonishment at his audacity is boundless : first, his daring to fire at so considerable a bird as a pheasant ; next, at his venturing to pretend he had the better of it, when we know that a rabbit (to be sure he asserted it was a wild one) put him to the rout last year. Pray ask him to thank A. D'Orsay for his letter which I have just received, and to give many kind remembrances to Lady B[lessington].

Can you, without much inconvenience, dictate to him (A[lfred] M[ontgomery]) an answer to the following query ? When a jaghire is granted in Hindostan, there being in many cases at least a condition of military service annexed to it, does the jaghirdar ever grant out parts of the land to *sub-jaghirdars*—on a similar condition, resembling our subinfeudation ? I conclude not, and that he only collects his men to bring into the field the best way he can. Pray do not give yourself the least trouble about this, but some things I have lately been reading in the Despatches make one a little curious about it.

I am no believer of course in all these foolish rumours of coalition. Indeed, the Duke and Peel would be frantic to think of such a thing, when by a little delay, to which they seem not at all averse, they have the power in their hands ; and surely whatever squabbles they may have with the Ultras and Orangemen, they never can suppose that these will again commit the error they did in 1830—of going against them.

But this Repeal agitation I perceive is alarming some who have jobs to do with the peasant; people are apprehensive it may upset them. I cannot see much cause to think so, for O'Connell is not enough in earnest about it to quarrel with the present Government. Ebrington's slap seems to have been taken after the manner of holding up the other cheek; and indeed it was gentle enough, though somewhat applied to a sore place (patronage). It will keep off many Irish jobbers from joining the Repeal cry. I am informed, by one who has taken pains to examine the subject, that Minister has held entirely back from the present agitation, from the prevailing belief that O ['Connell] is not in earnest. I should add, however, that my informant differs with me, and thinks he is and that he will take means to convince them of it.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SIR RICHARD JENKINS[2]

Private *Hurlingham: July* 20, 1838

In the whole course of a long public life I have never received more pleasure from any event than I feel from that which you announce to me. The honour conferred on you far exceeds in lustre, and is much more suitable to the services which you have rendered to the Empire. Besides, it is the

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 128.

[2] Richard Jenkins (1775-1853), who had rendered good service in India between 1798 and 1827, was on July 20, 1838, made a Knight Grand Cross of the Order of the Bath. He was in that year Deputy-Chairman of the East India Company, becoming in 1839 Chairman.

first conferred on the Civil Service of India, in any instance, below the rank of Governor; and you are the first on this new foundation of honour for that service, of which all must allow you to be the principal ornament.

I feel a personal and a parental pride in this most judicious and noble act of justice towards genuine merit, fostered under my own eyes, and led by my own hands into the path of glory. The conduct of Lord Glenelg[1] and of Sir John Hobhouse[2] exceeds all praise, and it is most creditable to the Government in general to have moved above the low track of ordinary patronage on this occasion, and to have taught the civil servants in India, by this example, that their merits will be rewarded in their country without regard to differences of political opinion, or to considerations of party.

The part which I have taken in this affair was an act of strict public duty, but I shall always rejoice in having been instrumental in any degree to a proceeding of Government from which such great advantages are likely to arise in the administration of our Oriental dominions, now and hereafter.

That you may long live to enjoy this well-deserved honour, and to augment it by future public service, is the sincere wish and confident

[1] Charles Grant, Baron Glenelg (1778-1866), who was President of the Board of Control, 1830-1835, carried in 1833 the charter vesting the East India Company's property in the Crown.

[2] Sir John Cam Hobhouse, Bart., after Baron Broughton de Gryfford (1786-1869), President of the Board of Control in succession to Glenelg, 1835-1841, and again 1846-1852.

expectation of your true friend and faithful and obliged servant.[1]

THE MARQUESS OF LONDONDERRY[2] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Rose Bank: July 15, 1839

Your Lordship's private and confidential letter has been most gratifying to my feelings. I have studiously endeavoured that my tone to Lord Brougham should be as moderate as possible under the heavy calls his Lordship has made on my indignation. Forgive me, my dear Lord, but I cannot think Lord Brougham can suppose he has greatly served my brother's memory, unless his Lordship has entirely lost his senses; and if his Lordship has really an excellent heart and a kind disposition, it is a pity he does not employ them in sparing those who are departed from the restlessness of his mind and the venom of his pen. Your Lordship has a just right to defend as far as possible your friend. But alas! Lord Brougham has proved a bitter enemy to the man I loved above all mankind, and I do assure you I take no small credit to myself (and I attribute it entirely to your Lordship) that I have been so temperate in reply as I think I have been.

I will attentively consider your Lordship's very kind suggestions, and although I frankly own I

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 132.

[2] Charles William Stewart, third Marquess of Londonderry (1778-1854), half-brother of the second Marquess (better known as Lord Castlereagh), soldier and diplomatist. He compiled the *Memoir and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh*, 1848-1853.

have not the feeling of diluting the pungent, I will see if there is yet time in the Press for softening the parts you deem objectionable.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* SIR CHARLES THEOPHILUS METCALFE

Kingston House: August 1839

Your appointment (so highly honourable to you) to the Privy Council affords me the opportunity of repeating in writing the congratulations which I have already offered to you on the very distinguished manner in which you have been called by Her Majesty to the arduous and interesting duties of the Government of Jamaica.

At this moment, and under all the circumstances of that Government, it is one of the most important stations in the British Empire.

It is a matter of cordial joy and affectionate pride to me to witness the elevation of a personage whose great talents and virtues have been cultivated under my anxious care, and directed by my hand to the public service in India; where, having filled the first station in the Government of that vast Empire with universal applause, his merits and exalted reputation have recommended him to his Sovereign and her country as the man best qualified to consummate the noblest work of humanity, justice, and piety ever attempted by any state since the foundation of civilised society. You have been called to this great charge by the free, unsolicited choice of your Sovereign; and that choice is the universal subject of approbation

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 154.

by the voice of her whole people. No appointment ever received an equal share of applause. In a letter which I had the honour of receiving from you, and which is published in my Indian Despatches, you are pleased to say that you were educated in my school, and that it was the school of virtue, integrity, and honour. That school has produced much good fruit for the service of India. You are one of the most distinguished of that produce, and in your example it is a high satisfaction to me to observe that the benefits of my institute are now extended beyond the limits of that Empire for whose good government it was founded.

It is among the principal blessings of advanced age to witness the successful results of early service; and if I have failed in all my other endeavours to serve the British Empire, the foundation of the College of Fort William, which has given you and others to the public service, must ever be to me the subject of satisfactory reflection.

May your future career be as glorious as the past, and may the termination of your government be blessed by the happy settlement and orderly establishment of that interesting society which under your wisdom and temper will, I trust, afford an additional proof that the freedom of the people, duly regulated, is the best security for the prosperity, happiness, and peace of nations.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 161.

SAMUEL ROGERS[1] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

St. James's Place : November 12, 1839

Many, many thanks ! I discovered your letter among others on my table when I returned home last night from the Continent ; and I need not say, I am sure, with what delight I read the verses. They are beautiful, and well worthy of a better age. May they bring again into favour a tree which on its arrival here was hailed universally, but has, I think, most unaccountably been neglected of late.

You mention it as flourishing on the banks of the Thames. Was it not first planted there by one of our poets ? I mean Mr. Pope. Lord Orford, if I am not much mistaken, says so.[2]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* LORD HOLLAND

Private and confidential *Kingston House*

November 13, 1839

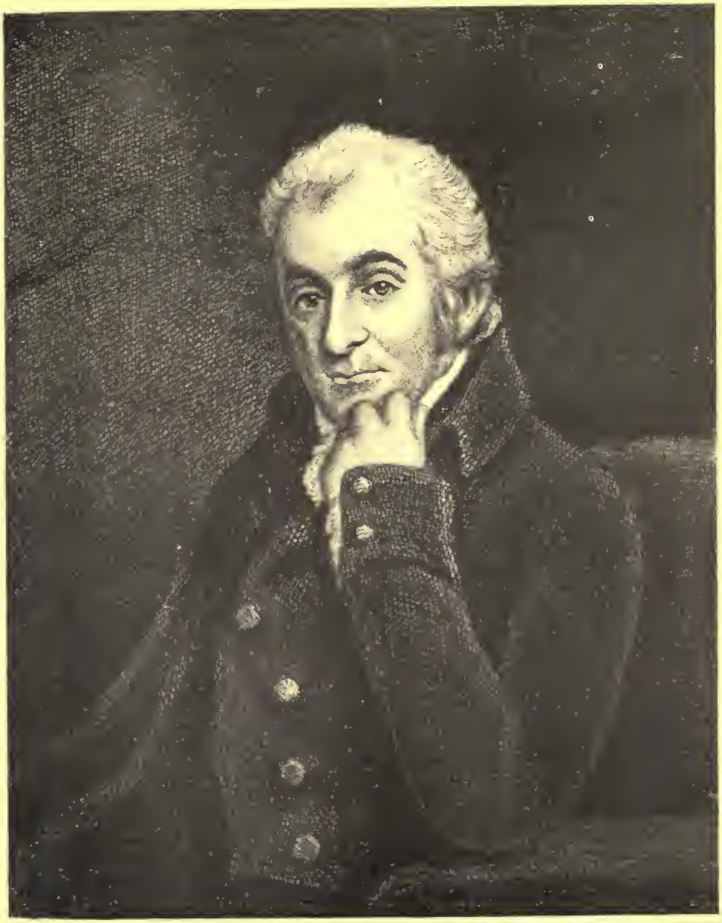
My acknowledgments of your most kind, amiable, and, I must add, able letter of the 11th October, would have been returned to you long ago, had I not been engaged by the very impudent intrusion of an acquaintance of yours, who came upon me, not manfully and boldly, as he is said to visit you, and used to visit the great Lord Chatham and his son, but (as some Ministers are accused of doing their work) under false colours, sneaking and shuffling and cheating, and hardly

[1] Samuel Rogers (1763-1855), the banker-poet, was intimate with all the eminent men of his day. He was offered, but declined, the Laureateship in 1850.

[2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 180.

perceptible until you feel the pinch or bite. This was the character of my first attack of gout, which is said to be the renewal of a lease of which the regular and legitimate instrument expired nine years ago, and which is now held merely on sufferance.

My sentiments respecting the present Government were never extended to your Lordship, from whom it would be the extreme of ingratitude not to acknowledge that I have always experienced the greatest kindness and indulgence. Nothing has been more painful to me in the unjust, treacherous, and cruel act by which Lord Melbourne expelled me from the public service, than my necessary separation from your society. My exile is more painful because it is entirely involuntary; and (if ever I have the happiness to converse with your Lordship again) I will prove the conduct of Lord Melbourne towards me to have been such as to render it impossible for me to pursue any other course than that which I have adopted. The case, indeed, is such, that it must for the benefit of history be made public: I am in possession of ample materials (under Lord Melbourne's own hand) for my justification, and if that gracious Providence which has hitherto deigned not only to preserve my life, but all the faculties of my mind, should extend its indulgence for a few weeks, I hope to be able to submit to the world a statement of truth which will produce astonishment in those who have any feeling for the honour of a great party, or any sense of truth, justice, or honest dealing.



J. Hoppner, R.A. pinxt. *C. W. Sherborn, sculpt.*

SAMUEL ROGERS

So much for my political feelings. Now for dear Eton and Latin verse. I am very happy to hear that Eton is not to be mutilated by Sheil,[1] Wyse,[2] or O'Connell. I had heard some alarming reports on that subject, and from authority which I credited ; but I no more intended to involve you in any such projects than to include you in my complaints against Lord Melbourne's persecution of me.

The attempt in my verses to unite the Etonian muse with the principles of religion is not founded on mere fancy, with a negligence of fact ; in me it arose not only from conviction of general truth, but from positive experience in my own person. My tutors (Davies and Norbury) were very able, kind, and attentive ; they were certainly aided by the Archbishop of Canterbury (an old and true Etonian), who put me to Eton, and constantly superintended my career through that noble institution.

The whole frame of the institution, with the vicinity of royal Windsor and the connection between Lambeth and Eton, certainly bred me (not to be a citizen of the world, nor of America, nor of any fantastic fabric of visionary and impracticable self-government, nor a subject of Petersburg, Paris, Vienna, Madrid, or Rome) to

[1] Richard Lalor Sheil (1791-1851), barrister, politician, and dramatist, Member of Parliament from 1830. He was Vice-President of the Board of Trade, 1838-1841, and Master of the Mint, 1846-1850.

[2] Sir Thomas Wyse (1791-1862), politician and diplomatist, entered Parliament in 1830. He was a Lord of the Treasury, 1839-1841, and Secretary for the Board of Control, 1846-1849.

be the subject of a limited Protestant monarchy, and to be a dutiful member of a Protestant Established Church. In this allegiance and faith I was born, bred, and hope to die. At Oxford I continued the same ; and yet (notwithstanding the slanders of that ungrateful, graceless bog-trotter O'Connell) I will not yield the palm of liberality in the administration of Government even to *unparalleled* Normanby. To prove that I imbibed the principles of religion at Eton, and cultivated them at Oxford, I have annexed some extracts from exercises at both places, which I recommend to your patient indulgence.

Pray present my best and most grateful respects to Lady Holland.[1]

LORD HOLLAND *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

December 1, 1839

I obey your commands and send you copies of your letters and verses ; but I value the originals so much that I trust you will allow me to keep them for myself.

The fidelity of my amanuensis not altogether consorting with the Etonian or Latin muses (*Musis consociata*), I ventured to return your admirable exercises in my own scrawl, and I rejoice that I did so. In the execution of my task I had leisure and opportunity to observe and to admire the classical purity of the thought and diction, and the beautiful run (you will excuse an Eton phrase, however homely) of the versification. Whether they logically " show the religious spirit

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 181.

of the verses" at Eton I will not presume to determine, but they certainly prove most amply and agreeably the poetical spirit of one Eton boy's religion, and I am not quite sure that the conclusion you so triumphantly draw from these excellent verses accords as strictly with the rules of logic and the principles of Aldrick, which you afterwards studied at Christ Church, as they unquestionably do with those both of prosody and composition inculcated in the purest models of antiquity.

If Pope, who was a Roman Catholic and not an Etonian, had learnt the Latin language and prosody as well as Eton could teach it, he might have written his "Messiah" in hexameters and alcaics as beautiful as your fragments and lyrics, and superior to Johnson's translation of it, without borrowing any religious instruction from the Protestant schools, and without knowing more of the theological tenets of our Church than those whom she repudiates as idolaters and stigmatises as ignorant and benighted dunces. From this I gather that the verses, warm as is the devotion that they breathe, prove the great proficiency in language, prosody, and taste of the writer, rather than his knowledge in divinity, or that abiding sense of the blessed truths of the Gospel which our Bishops nowadays exact, but which I humbly contend that for the ten years I was at Eton was allowed to play the truant unquestioned, and was as much of a "non-resident" as most of the beneficed clergymen of the Establishment.

Goodall[1] had surely no reason to turn up his nose at "adamata." If "adamare" be generally to be "enamoured of," it is yet used in prose as well as verse to express filial affection, and unless I am mistaken Cicero applies it to the fondness with which controversial philosophers occasionally embrace and cling to their doctrines. Had he objected to another participle in the preceding line, and yet more in the second of your hexameter fragments "Per terras *sacrata* fides," I should have been more startled; but Ovid, by using it for *dedicated* when he calls the work of the "Fasti" "opus *sacratum* Augusto," proves that it is not always used in a bad sense, and that the impression I had of its meaning *accursed* rather than *consecrated*, *sacré* rather than *consecré*, is erroneous.

Accept again my warmest thanks for your verses and letters, and above all forgive my sauciness in remarking on the first and answering the last. The first impertinence arises, I assure you, from the sense I have of the general perfection of the verses and the habit (caught and taught at Eton, by-the-bye) of labouring hard to find fault with any piece of modern Latinity that one admires. I should have taken these copies myself to Knightsbridge if the weather and remaining cold in my head had not detained me at home; and Lord Denman, who penetrated so far in the fog, tells me that you were confined by indisposition. Lady Holland joins me in cordial remembrances, and hopes that you are entirely recovered.[2]

[1] Joseph Goodall (1760-1840), Provost of Eton from 1809.
[2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 188.

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* LORD PLUNKET

Kingston House, Knightsbridge
December 26, 1839

You accepted my Latin tribute to my revered and beloved Alma Mater with so much grace and indulgent kindness, that I am induced to lay at your feet an attempt to convey the same sentiments in English. This effort was made by desire of Lord Brougham. It is not a *translation;* no man knows better than your Lordship that the simplicity and severity of the Latin muse repudiate translation. It is an attempt to transfuse the spirit of the former verses into our language. In some parts I have opened my heart with more freedom; both compositions come directly from *that source,* and are, therefore, curious, if not pardonable. I preserve your letter as an invaluable monument not only of your high classical taste and judgment but of your pure and sound principles of religion and government; (may I add?) and of that honourable and firm friendship by which you have always distinguished me. It is among the proudest recollections of my public life that my hands placed your Lordship on the highest seat of justice in my native land, which you have filled not merely with honour and dignity, but with glory and splendour.

I was grieved to have missed the pleasure of seeing you when on your late visit to London you honoured me with a visit. The distinguished reception you met (so honourable to you, and to those great lawyers and statesmen who paid that just tribute) will, I hope, induce you to renew your

intercourse with us, when I shall hope to be more fortunate.[1]

SAMUEL ROGERS *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

St. James's Place : December 27, 1839

Again must I break in upon you to thank you. But you have perplexed me beyond measure, for I am really at a loss to say which I admire most—the Latin or the English poem. Surely no tree was ever before so honoured ; and if she continues to weep after this, she must indeed be fond of grief.

As to the laurel, she must be dying of jealousy, and would most certainly desert your brows if she could.[2]

JOHN KEATE, D.D.,[3] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Hartley Westpall, Hampshire
January 21, 1840

The receipt of your Lordship's beautiful English lines, attached to another copy of the Latin *Salix Babylonica*, ought to have been acknowledged before this time ; but I trust that your Lordship has not concluded from my silence that I undervalue the present. The fact is, that absence from home since I received it, and other circumstances, have hitherto prevented me from returning my best thanks for this fresh instance of your Lordship's kindness and condescension. No one, who

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 201.

[2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 203.

[3] John Keate, D.D. (1773-1852), Headmaster of Eton, 1809-1834 ; Canon of Windsor, 1820 ; Rector of Hartley Westpall, 1824-1852.

has any taste for poetry, can fail to admire both the Latin and English verses. I hardly know to which I give the preference. They are both, in my opinion, equal to the highest strains of our Eton poet, Gray.

That your Lordship may retain these powers unimpaired, and be able *curas lenire seniles* by such successful converse with the muse for many years; and that Eton may long be allowed to class you among her great living poets, is the sincere wish of one who does not yield even to your Lordship in attachment to our Alma Mater.

I feel highly flattered and gratified by your Lordship's opinion of my youthful composition, which I took the liberty of sending you, not merely for itself, but because it was reprinted last year (without my knowledge) in company with the three beautiful poems of "Bobus" Smith,[1] which I thought your Lordship might not have seen, and which I have always considered first-rate compositions.[2]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* VISCOUNT SIDMOUTH

Kingston House: February 19, 1840

I am deeply sensible of the kindness of your enquiries. I have suffered a great deal of inconvenience from a complaint which they tell me is a usual companion of my advanced age, and is not dangerous. But I am not so infirm of

[1] Robert Percy Smith, called "Bobus" Smith (1770-1845), elder brother of Sydney Smith, Advocate-General of Bombay, 1803-1810, famous for his Latin verses.

[2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 223.

mind as to be unprepared for a call; and in this I know I agree with you, as on most other subjects for sixty years, our first meeting being in the theatre of Oxford in July 1779. Thank my God, He has granted me the use of all my faculties to this hour, when they are all not only as perfect (especially memory) as they ever were, but even more so. This is a resource which sheds balm over every infirmity of body. The other day I quoted the old verses to my brother Arthur, " My mind to me a kingdom is," but it is strictly truth ; for the vivacity of my mind (by the grace of its Maker) supplies me with new life and spirit every hour of my existence.

I am much better, indeed nearly well of my original complaint, but the Arctic night which has overspread the land for the last three months has sadly checked my recovery.

I am grieved to hear that you have not been well, but I trust your complaints are not greater than mine ; and that we meet again and *see* one another whenever the light of day shall shine in this quarter of the world.[1]

THOMAS GRENVILLE *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Hamilton Place : March 19, 1840

I hasten to acknowledge with very many thanks the kind and flattering expressions of your letter and the book of *Primitiae et Reliquiae*, which was its valuable accompaniment.

It shall be placed in my library next in succession to a similar volume of my beloved brother's, which

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 235.

I trust you will think, as he would have thought, its most appropriate position; for he had for you through life the most devoted, sincere, and unvarying friendship. You were fellow-students in youth, you worked together in public life, and in the page of history your fame and his may probably be commensurate.

Arcades ambo
Et cantare pares et respondere parati.[1]

LADY BLESSINGTON *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Gore House: March 27, 1840

I have been touched to tears by the charming verses you have confided to me, and moved by your great goodness to me in granting them to grace my book. Never did I feel more proud of our country than while perusing them, for where could hearts more warm and generous be found, or genius to mould the expressions that flow from them be met, to surpass those of the three charming persons engaged in this interesting exchange of sentiments that do honour to them?

I had the honour and happiness, and I esteem it as both, to have known the Lord Chief Justice Bushe in my early youth, and even then he had few warmer admirers of that amiability and talent for which all the world must give him credit. Judge then, my dear Lord, with what interest I perused his beautiful letter, in which his attachment to one whom I admire and reverence so profoundly as I do your Lordship has found an echo in my heart. The verses of Miss Fox delight me, and

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 259.

those written by you will serve as a monument more indestructible than marble, to do honour to her noble grandsire and herself.

Happy and proud will it make me should the Lord Chief Justice have no objection to permit the correspondence so honourable to all engaged in it to appear in my book. Such examples of friendship among the highly gifted are unhappily so rare, that this delightful proof is well calculated to make a deep and salutary impression.

I beg again to renew the expression of my gratitude, and to add my prayers that you may long be spared to reflect honour on our country.

P.S. I know not if I have done right in keeping the letter and verses until the sanction of the Lord Chief Justice arrives, but if I have erred, they can be immediately returned to your Lordship.[1]

JOHN KEATE, D.D., *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Cloisters, Windsor: April 7, 1840

I cannot sufficiently express my gratitude to your Lordship for the kind interest which you have taken in my success, and your exertions to ensure it, which I am afraid I shall presently prove to your Lordship that I have not deserved. Your very flattering letter of the 4th would have received an earlier answer if I had not thought it better to wait for the event of this day. I have now to inform your Lordship that Mr. J. Lonsdale, a very distinguished Etonian and Kingsman, bencher at Lincoln's Inn, and head of King's College, London, was this day elected Provost by

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 289.

Sir Thomas Lawrence, pinxt. *S. Cousins, sculpt.*

MARGUERITE, COUNTESS OF BLESSINGTON

the college. Your Lordship will naturally be surprised by these words, but the fact is, that the Minister did not send down the Queen's nomination till late last night, and that was Archdeacon Hodgson, Lord Denman's son-in-law, who is not eligible by statute, as not having the required qualification of a degree of Doctor, or Bachelor of Divinity, or of Bachelor of Laws, in addition to that of Master of Arts. The college, therefore, of necessity rejected him, and the election, which had been fixed for this day, could not be deferred. They offered me the Provostship, which I, unwisely, as I fear your Lordship will think, declined; and this morning they elected Mr. Lonsdale.

I had nearly made up my mind, after many struggles, to refuse the Provostship, even if it had been offered me by the Crown, which, I must own, I did expect, even after your Lordship's allusion to political considerations (which ought not to have affected me, who have had no connection with Eton during the present administration), because I knew that, independently of your Lordship's assurance, Lord Melbourne, more than a year ago, had expressed himself as very favourably disposed towards me, when Lord Denman, supposing that I was to be set aside, applied for Mr. Hodgson. I know that Lord Melbourne upon that occasion said that he could not pass over my strong claims, and Lord Denman in consequence very handsomely withdrew his application in my favour. I certainly should have been gratified with the offer, though, as I have said, I had nearly made up my mind to refuse the Provostship,

because I had no doubt but that I should be required to give up my canonry, without which I thought that I could not support the expenses of the Provostship; and the late lamented Provost felt this, and declined it, when Mr. Perceval required the resignation of the canonry. When the Provostship was offered me by the college I own that I was unwilling to be the subject of this experiment, the issue of which was not certain; and, besides, I felt that if I had accepted it at their hands, though the Government in that case could not have deprived me of the canonry, yet the Plurality Act would have taken away that or a favourite country residence upon my living near Strathfieldsaye, on which I have expended a considerable sum, and am still spending more with the view of making it private property for the benefit of my family after me. This would have been a great loss to me and mine, and this consideration has in a great measure influenced my decision. But a still stronger reason for having come to the resolution is my time of life. If the Provostship had been within my reach ten or twelve years ago, I should have had less hesitation in accepting it; but sixty-seven is, in my opinion, too advanced an age to begin a new mode of life, and particularly to take the reins of so important a government as that of Eton College, and I readily resign it to a younger and more efficient Provost. I ought to apologise for troubling your Lordship with these details, but I am anxious to justify myself in your eyes, for I am very much afraid that you will condemn this act of mine as a

proof of weakness and want of spirit. Yet I am convinced that Eton will be no loser by it ; and I have great satisfaction in assuring your Lordship, who takes such an interest in the credit of the college, that Mr. Lonsdale is a first-rate scholar, a learned divine, and an excellent man, one who is likely to uphold the dignity of his office, and to promote the general good of this noble establishment.[1]

JOHN KEATE, D.D., *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Cloisters, Windsor : April 17, 1840

The great interest which your Lordship takes in the affairs of Eton induces me to continue my history of its present state, which I am afraid will rather disappoint than please your Lordship. Eton, I am sorry to say, is still without a Provost. Mr. Lonsdale, who, when the Provostship was offered him by the college, expressed his delight, and said that no preferment could be more acceptable, after his election began to waver, and when presented by the college to the Bishop of Lincoln, the visitor, asked for a day's consideration before he was confirmed. That was granted. He then asked for *five* days. That was also granted, and during that period he discovered that by taking the Provostship he should be doing an injury to Mr. Hodgson, who had only lost it by a mistake. He has now resigned it in favour, as he says, of Mr. Hodgson, thus in effect giving away the patronage of the college. A new election must now take place, and in the meantime Mr. Hodgson

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 311.

is qualifying himself by taking his degree of Bachelor of Divinity at Cambridge. I conclude that the Queen's second nomination of him will soon arrive, and that he will be elected, for the college never objected to him, but to his want of qualification; and I am happy to assure your Lordship that I think Archdeacon Hodgson a very amiable man and a good scholar. He was my pupil in former days, and a very distinguished one. He is author of a very good translation of Juvenal. I understand that he is indebted to the Duke of Devonshire for his interest with Lord Melbourne in procuring the appointment.

His living, Bakewell, is near Chatsworth, and the Duke has had opportunities of hearing him preach, and has been pleased with him. It may thus be true that Lord Denman has not personally opposed me with Lord Melbourne, though Lord Melbourne may have forgotten what he said above a year ago in my favour to Lord Denman. In the midst of these circumstances, which I am afraid will not please your Lordship, I think it will be some consolation to you to be assured that Lord Normanby was not an Etonian.

It gives me great satisfaction to hear that your Lordship does not disapprove of my conduct in these transactions.[1]

Memorandum by THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Kingston House: August, 1840

After nine years of service as a Lord of the Treasury and a member of the India Board, and

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 330.

when the British Empire in the East was not only menaced by external foes but reduced to the most alarming state by national hostility and disaffection, Lord Wellesley was unanimously chosen by the Cabinet to proceed to India as Governor-General.

The events of his Lordship's administration for upwards of five years are detailed in the recently published edition of his *Despatches*, wherein it will be perceived that, not only was every feeling of danger from without annihilated, and all domestic foes destroyed, but that public credit was restored, commerce augmented, the entire sea-coast of the peninsula of Hindostan, including Cuttack, Balasore, and the whole of Orissa, occupied by England, and 250,000 *square miles of territory*, 35,000,000 *subjects, and* £6,000,000 *annual revenues* added to the British Crown in India.

His Lordship's first act in 1798 was the disarming of 14,000 troops officered by Frenchmen at Haiderábád, without the shedding of a drop of blood ;

2nd.—The dethronement of Tipu Sultan, and the partition of his dominions, after the capture of Seringapatam, the entire country occupied by Hyder and Tipu being now in the peaceable possession of England ;

3rd.—The breaking up of Záman Shah's threatening power on our North-West frontier, by a well-arranged mission to Persia, which forced Záman Shah to return to his own dominions ;

4th.—The entire destruction of the Marátha confederacy ; the total dispersion of the forces

of Sindia and Holkar; the glorious military actions of Agra, Delhi, Laswari, Coel, Assaye, etc.; the capture of the formidable artillery of the Maráthas and French brigades under Perron; the possession of Delhi and of the person of the Mogul; the acquirement of the whole of the North-West provinces, and of the sea-coast line, Cuttack, etc., and of the whole of Orissa, connecting Bengal with Madras; the establishment of subsidiary alliances throughout India; and the arrangements consolidated for giving to Britain the undivided supremacy throughout Hindostan and the Dekkan.

5th.—The plan of combining a British and Anglo-Indian army on the plains of Egypt, for the expulsion of the French from Cairo and Alexandria, was entirely Lord Wellesley's.* His part of the plan was triumphantly executed by Baird's successful expedition to Egypt.

[* See his letter to Mr. Dundas, written on the day Lord Wellesley received the news of the fall of Seringapatam, by despatches.—*Wellesley's note.*]

6th.—The captures of the isles of France, Bourbon, Jarva, and Manila were all planned in their original details by Lord Wellesley.

7th.—The important question of the British acquisition and sole government of the Carnatic and of Tanjore was entirely the work of Lord Wellesley.

8th.—The attainment of half the territories of Oudh, and the important acquisition of a line of valuable frontier territory in that quarter, was the result of his Lordship's personal arrangements at Lucknow.

9th.—The reform of the East India Company's finances, the extension of their commerce, and the infusing of a noble and patriotic spirit into every branch of the service, civil and military, are felt in their beneficial results to the present day; while the encouragement given to Oriental literature by the establishment of the College of Fort William, the Christian aid given to religion by the translation of the Scriptures and the reform of the Protestant ecclesiastical establishment in India, the suppression of infanticide, and of human sacrifice at the mouth of the Ganges, all tended to place the British power in the East on the most durable and respectable basis.

For all these splendid services Lord Wellesley received only an addition to his hereditary title of an Irish Marquisate ! ! !

And on his return to England, a measure of impeachment for high crimes and misdemeanours was commenced, which ended not until the first and second charges were thrown out by the House of Commons, after the defence had cost Lord Wellesley £30,000.* The Irish Marquisate was conferred on Lord Wellesley for the capture of Seringapatam, *entirely against his own wishes*, while the pecuniary benefit amounting to £100,000 was offered to and refused by his Lordship, in order that the gallant army which had taken Seringapatam should receive the fullest and largest amount of prize-money, without any deduction on his account.

[*He was obliged to establish an office in London with clerks, etc., for nearly two years.—*Wellesley's note.*]

The Ministers of the Crown (Lord Castlereagh, etc.), officially communicated to Lord Wellesley * the intentions of his Sovereign to reward his Lordship in a manner suitable to the great benefits conferred on India and on England, *as soon as a mature opinion could be formed on the policy of his measures.* That promise has never been fulfilled to the present day. The wars engaged in by Lord Wellesley and the policy he pursued in India were in opposition to the opinions of almost every person in England and in India; but time has sanctioned the wisdom of the course pursued by him. Upwards of forty years have elapsed; all Lord Wellesley's conquests and acquisitions of territory and revenue have been retained, his policy sanctioned by precept and example, and public men of all parties have joined in ascribing the salvation of India and the stability of our power to his Lordship's bold, wise, and comprehensive government.

[* Despatches from Lord Castlereagh.—*Wellesley's note.*]

The next in the list of Lord Wellesley's services was his Lordship's Embassy to Spain in 1809, a mission which prepared the way for the British occupation of Spain, and the expulsion of the French troops from the Peninsula of Europe. This is fully shown by his Lordship's Spanish despatches. For this mission, specially, his Lordship received the Order of the Garter, in fulfilment of a promise made by George III., before Lord Wellesley would undertake the mission.

The Order of the Golden Fleece was tendered

to his Lordship by the Spanish Minister, M. De Guray, but was refused until the Spaniards should by their exertions prove themselves worthy of British assistance.

As Minister for Foreign Affairs, Lord Wellesley planned the Northern Alliance, which ended in detaching Russia and Sweden from the power of France, and in breaking up the combination of Europe against England, the first prelude to the downfall of Napoleon. While Secretary of State for the Foreign Department, Lord Wellesley commenced measures for recognising the independence of South America. This and other questions of his Lordship's policy were subsequently followed up and acted on by Lord Castlereagh and by Mr. Canning.

The government of the Marquess Wellesley as Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland has never yet had justice done to its liberal and impartial policy. It is a remarkable fact that Lord Wellesley's ancestor (*Walter Cowley*) was the *first Protestant Solicitor-General of Ireland at the Reformation;* and his Lordship appointed the *first Roman Catholic* (*Sir M. O'Loghlan*) *Solicitor-General since the Reformation.*

When the Marquess Wellesley first went to Ireland he truly declared, shortly after his arrival, in answer to an address, that he came "to administer, not to alter the law," and while Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland he caused the majesty of the law to be respected; but he never ceased to advocate equal laws for all classes of His Majesty's subjects; and his constant efforts for the local

improvement of Ireland are now beginning to yield the full fruits, and to demonstrate the advantage of extending public works.

Lord Melbourne and Lord Duncannon can testify that every liberal improvement in the laws of Ireland was approved, and many originated with him.*

[* On reading this to Lord Duncannon, he said, "*All.*"—*Wellesley's note.*]

It was a great satisfaction to hear the first Minister of the Crown declare solemnly in his place before the assembled peers of the United Kingdom, that "*never were services rendered by subject to Sovereign* in any state equal to those of the Marquess Wellesley."

Mr. Pitt in 1805 had settled that Lord Wellesley should be made a Marquess of the United Kingdom immediately on his return to England. This arrangement Lord Wellesley would not carry into effect when he found his dearest friend on the point of death.

Lord Grenville in 1806 offered the same rank to Lord Wellesley; but it was then refused, on account of differences with that administration.

If the offer of either Mr. Pitt or of Lord Grenville had been accepted, Lord Wellesley would have been above the majority of British Marquesses. He would have ranked next to the Marquess of Exeter. Lord Wellesley, therefore, submits the justice of his claim to a dukedom of the United Kingdom, as a reward merited by public service, and, therefore, injurious to no other person.

If any other person can prove that he has saved

so large a portion of the British Empire from imminent danger, greatly increased that empire in territory, revenue, power, and resources of every kind, and that all his conquests and acquisitions have been retained, and the benefit received from them enjoyed for nearly half a century, and that those vast possessions and territories are now flourishing in full prosperity and glory, Lord Wellesley would think such a person's claims might stand in such a competition with his. But he feels it to be his duty to submit that such services as his should have an adequate record in the peerage of the United Kingdom; and that nothing inferior to the elevation which he suggests could afford such a record. He is far from disparaging the services of others; but when Lord Minto, Lord Amherst, and Lord Auckland have received each two steps in the peerage of the United Kingdom for their services, he must observe that he has received only one step, and that in the Irish peerage.

Lord Wellesley was a Baron in the peerage of the United Kingdom when he went to India.

Lord Wellesley knows that this act of justice and honour would be most acceptable to the Court of Directors, and to the whole of the East Indian service, both at home and abroad.

Although his claim is submitted merely on public grounds, its recognition and admission would be such an act of generous and noble and patriotic spirit as must for his life render gratitude and attachment his primary duty and obligation.[1]

[1] Add. MSS. 37317 f. 80.

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Colehill, Charing, Kent*
October 18, 1840

I am exceedingly sorry that I was prevented from having the pleasure of seeing you before I came away. I had arranged so as to call on Monday evening, after seeing poor Lady Augusta Paget (about her affairs), but was kept till eight o'clock in the Lords on judicial business, and did not get away from Lady Augusta till it was too late to wait upon you. However, I hope soon to be in town for a day or two, and that I shall then see your Lordship as well as last week—better seems impossible.

I have no news of any kind. The French anger seems subsiding, nor did I ever expect to see any *immediate* mischief; but I fear the bad feeling is increased, which will before long break out in mischief.

This place is dull but quiet, and there is a very tolerable library. The neighbourhood, too, is scanty—which I reckon a prime recommendation.

Will you be so kind as to make Alfred [Montgomery] send me a few lines to say how you are, and how you like Pow's[1] "*elevation to the peerage*"? I suppose no one can affect to doubt the whole history of it—namely, that it was necessary last year to remove Rice from the Exchequer, and no one durst propose Pow for his succession. So Pow threatened (as anyone may)

[1] Charles Powlett Thomson (1799-1841) entered Parliament in 1826, and became President of the Board of Trade. He was made Governor-General of Canada, 1839, and created Baron Sydenham in the following year.

to break them up, and then before they sent him to Canada he required a peerage to boot.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* VISCOUNT PALMERSTON

Kingston House: September 16, 1840

Your very kind letter of the 12th of this month demands my very warmest acknowledgments and my sincere gratitude. I am truly sensible of your obliging attention to Lady Wellesley's nephew, whom I believe to be endowed with the best qualities. He has not received the best education, but I think he is capable of bearing a very handsome polish by a further mixture with good society. Lady Wellesley desires me to offer her grateful thanks to your Lordship for the notice you have been pleased to take of this young gentleman.

My expressions respecting your Lordship are always the same as those which appear in my last letter. It is impossible to feel more sincere respect and esteem for any public character than I have always felt for your Lordship, since I have enjoyed the honour of your notice. These sentiments are not only confirmed, but greatly augmented by the communication which I have now received. But where can language be found to convey my sense of the honourable confidence reposed in me by this most flattering testimony, or to express my gratitude for the kind language by which it is accompanied? You may be assured that the impression is indelible, and that the confidence will not be abused.

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 351.

I have read these invaluable papers with the greatest and most minute attention, and, I must add, with the greatest admiration. Amidst all this confusion and alarm, and in spite of all the flippant insolence of the French Ministers, and of all their treachery and perversion of facts and principles, your Lordship has maintained the firm and lofty character of the British power in its true and elevated position of consistency and firmness, without pride, or passion, or obstinacy. The contrast is most striking, and, I own, to me somewhat amusing. Mr. Thiers[1] appears to be more conversant with the Revolutionary Diplomatic of Anacharsis Clootz, orator of the human "race," than with Grotius or Vatel; and to be worthy of the opprobrious term applied by Demosthenes to his adversary, Τριταγωνιστης, or *Actor tertiorum partium*, a strolling *player of the third* (or Tier's) class.

His phrases respecting the relation between the rebel Viceroy and his sovereign master, respecting the revolt of the Libanians against the rebel Viceroy; and his claim (M. Thiers') to be acquainted with the plans of operation against the rebel Viceroy, *after having refused to co-operate with*

[1] Louis Adolphe Thiers (1797-1877), statesman and historian, after holding minor offices, became Minister of the Interior in 1832 and again in 1834. From February to August 1836 he was President of the Council and Minister of Foreign Affairs, and again from May until October he was head of the Ministry, during which period he propounded a scheme for the fortification of Paris, which was duly carried out. In 1871 he became President of the Republic. His principal works are the *Histoire de la Révolution Française* and the *Histoire du Consulat et de l'Empire*.

VISCOUNT PALMERSTON

the allies in such an operation, and after having betrayed the allies to the rebel Viceroy ; all these arts are of the Clootz class of diplomatics ; and, if similar acts had been done in Athens, would have attracted all the fire of Demosthenes.

If your Lordship should desire it, I will write down my view of the whole question in detail, which will be entirely favourable to the line of policy which Her Majesty's Government has wisely and nobly pursued. But in order to give such an opinion I must request your Lordship to permit me to converse with some intelligent officer of the Foreign Department.

In the meanwhile, however, I beg leave to assure you that I cordially concur in the principles pursued by Her Majesty's Government, that I will support them to the utmost of my power, and that I most ardently wish success to any operations which may become necessary in maintenance of our just and honourable cause.

P.S. I confess I entertain the strongest suspicions of M. Thiers' good faith, and of the sinister and ambitious designs of France.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Colehill, Charing*
October 22, 1840

I grieve to observe that you have been ailing again, and I only hope and trust that the commencement of the *execrable* season of the year will find you able fully to meet it, but determined wisely to fly from it, namely, by shutting yourself up and

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 361.

resorting to the *under-ground sun* of our happy climate.

My view of the present alarming state of things[1] (I mean alarming for fear of the peace being broken) is short and simple. I do not care a straw which is right and which is wrong in this controversy between Palmerston and Thiers, because Thiers may be quite wrong and Palmerston quite right, and still we have no business to go to war on account of Syria. Nay, for aught I know, they may both be in the wrong. No, I am sure all must admit the French multitude are—not that the very worst symptoms of all, the 1792-3 tone of the late National Guards address proves anything, for it is the language of a few, and the body in general is averse to all violence, being the thousands of Paris shop-keepers; and Lord Palmerston, I know from himself, always reckons on them.

But my great fear is this: Suppose we got out of the *present scrape*, as I on the whole expect we shall? The bad feeling remains; 1814 and 1815 are not forgotten nor forgiven, and this unhappy Levant affair has roused it into mischievous action. Then comes some other affair, for example Spain, and we go to loggerheads because you cannot *twice* stop a fight when people wish it.

That Spanish question alarms one more than any other. I fear that the French, if they cannot have a war towards the Rhine, will ride off upon

[1] On August 6, Prince Louis Napoleon, with General Montholon and other supporters, made a descent upon France, but he was arrested at Boulogne, and imprisoned. On October 6, Guizot became Prime Minister of France.

a Spanish campaign ; and as their feeling toward us is stronger than any feeling they can have about *liberal* and *absolute* in Spain, they will take the latter side and we the former. Then Russia, Austria and Co., will be all with *them* and against us in *this*.

Indeed, I am not at all sure that they will not before long make up their quarrel with Russia even as to the Levant affairs.

Now, only see how impossible it would have been for Russia ever to have moved a man towards Constantinople, if England and France had continued firmly united. The only importance of Syria and M. Ali was as regards Russia mastering Turkey, and that could at any time have been prevented by France and England, even had Austria stood aloof, which assuredly she would not have done.

However, if Palmerston can prove to me that France refused to have anything to do with an arrangement whereby we and they should prevent Russia from marching southwards, then I can only say we shall appear not to be so very much in the wrong (I mean the wrong as regards our interests and those of peace), though I still should hesitate before I said that it was worth a General War, even to prevent Russia from encroaching

[1] In 1831 Mehemet Ali, Pacha of Egypt (1769-1849), captured Syria from the Turks and remained in possession of it undisturbed until 1839, when the Sultan unsuccessfully tried to wrest it from him. Then England and the allies came to the assistance of the Sultan, and an English fleet, under Stopford and Napier, took Beyrout, Acre, and Sidon, and restored Syria to its rightful monarch.

on one part of Turkey and France on another—as they now will probably end in doing.[1]

MISS CAROLINE FOX *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Holland House: October 27, 1840

Sympathy in sorrow, the sense of one common calamity, emboldens me to execute the commission which my dear Lady Holland has given me with less difficulty, and to address you with a freedom, my dear Lord, which otherwise our slight intimacy would hardly allow me to assume.[2]

She is unequal to the task herself; the very kindness of your letter, the warmth of the attachment you express for him whose loss we all, and I would fain believe the country, deplore, all this disables her from collecting her thoughts or holding a pen, but not indeed from feeling heartfelt gratitude and pride at your Lordship's offer of attending the last sad ceremony, in token of that affection and respect you bore him through life. But it must not be, it cannot be, my dear Lord, at this season of the year, at fifty miles from London, at Millbrook in Bedfordshire, where are deposited the remains of their beloved little daughter—a child who in sweetness of disposition and in intellect gave promise of being the counterpart of himself. For this reason your offer must not have been accepted, even had it not been a written desire of his, that the whole should be as private as possible; so that the attendance is confined to the sons and the nearest relations and connections.

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 385.

[2] Lord Holland died on October 22, 1840.

For this, however, it makes no difference in Lady Holland's sense of grateful obligation and that of the family to your Lordship for having given them such an unequivocal proof of the respect and affectionate attachment in which you hold his memory.[1]

Copy of Testimonial to LORD HOLLAND

No man ever lived more honoured and beloved than the late Lord Holland, and no man ever died more sincerely and cordially lamented. It would be a disgrace to society that his memory should not be distinguished by some testimony of respect, esteem, and affection. It is, therefore, proposed that such persons as concur in these sentiments should send their names privately to Lord Edward Howard, Norfolk House, London, in order that arrangements may be made for the purpose of giving effect to the general desire of paying a due tribute to such a memory.

Augustus F.
Wellesley
Lansdowne
J. Russell
Norfolk
Melbourne
Bedford
Ed. Ellice.[2]

COLONEL FOX *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

West Hill, Putney: November 4, 1840

My aunt has desired me to reply to your letter

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 391. [2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 393.

and to say how much she values, as we all do, the kind feeling that dictated it, and which prompts you to wish to take the lead in showing esteem and respect, which we love to think is just, towards the memory of my dear father.

It is most gratifying indeed to us to receive so many marks of respect for his character, both public and private, and from those of all shades of opinion and of all ranks and stations of life—from, in short, such as Lord Wellesley, down to the servants who attended and watched him with disinterested affection.

With respect to the monument : as your Lordship observes, it cannot originate with his family, and much as we are all justly flattered with your kindness, the whole arrangement of such an intention must rest with the feelings of his friends and of the public.[1]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Colehill, Charing*
November 19, 1840

I am extremely obliged to you for your great kindness in sending me the beautiful copy of the *Primitiae et Reliquae,* with the verses on poor Princess Augusta, who to my knowledge was one of the best of human beings—full of kindness and benevolent feeling. The verses are really admirable, and the Latin translation I even prefer to the original.

I shall not detain you with the *nothings* which alone I can have to say from the country, except

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 394.

one rather awkward matter which I hear from Paris, and which I should be truly sorry for. They say that Louis Philippe at first was extremely warlike, and that Thiers and Co. have a strong case on that ground. Whatever tends to weaken Louis Philippe's weight at the present moment I regard as very unfortunate and bad for peace. I hope very soon to have the gratification of seeing you, as I shall go to town for the judicial business in the Privy Council which begins the first of next month.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE DUKE OF RUTLAND [2]

Kingston House: December 28, 1840

Having been honoured with the intimate friendship and confidence of your Grace's truly illustrious and amiable father,[3] and having observed with the highest sentiments of respect and esteem the course of your own most honourable career in public and private life, I can appreciate the pleasure it must afford you to know that you have contributed most essentially to the happiness of my closing days by your excellent and, to me, invaluable letter. My early intimacy with the late Duke of Rutland has always been estimated by me as among the greatest blessings which Providence has been pleased to bestow on me, and

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 407.

[2] John Henry Manners, fifth Duke of Rutland (1787-1857.)

[3] Charles Manners, fourth Duke of Rutland (1754-1787), entered Parliament in 1774 and succeeded to the dukedom five years later. He was Lord Steward in 1783; Lord Privy Seal in Pitt's Ministry; and Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland, 1784.

one of the mainsprings of whatever I have been able to effect for the prosperity and glory of the British Empire. He was himself an abundant source of public honour and public virtue. He was the pupil of the great Lord Chatham, and he reflected honour even on that most accomplished master. He was the beloved friend of the lamented Pitt. I am well able from full knowledge to attest his character, and I most solemnly (after the expiration of upwards of half a century) declare that he was a most perfect patriot, truly attached to the liberties of his country, civil and religious, animated by hereditary spirit to maintain the British glory and power, and adorned with every quality which befits the highest rank and station in the freest and greatest state that has yet appeared in the civilised world. Holding such sentiments, your Grace will not be surprised that I should view Mr. Pitt's letter to your father as one of the highest honours I ever received, especially when it is considered that, at that time, I had not been in office under Mr. Pitt, although well known to him.

Your Grace's extreme kindness in sending me Mr. Pitt's letter demands my cordial and lasting gratitude.

I was induced to take the liberty of intruding my little collection of verses by Mr. Montgomery, who led me to hope that it might be agreeable to you to receive them. Your Grace's reception of them is most obliging.

Assuring your Grace that nothing can be more acceptable to me than your kind recollection of my

long attachment to your noble family, I have the honour to be . . .[1]

The East India Company now paid a further tribute to Wellesley, and at a Court of Directors held on the 10th of March, 1841, it was "Resolved, *nemine contradicente*, that, referring to the important services of the Most Noble the Marquess Wellesley, in establishing and consolidating the British dominion in India upon a basis of security which it never before possessed, a statue of his Lordship be placed in the general court-room of this house as a public, conspicuous, and permanent mark of the admiration and gratitude of the East India Company."

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* THE DIRECTORS OF THE EAST INDIA COMPANY

Kingston House: March 18, 1841

So high is my estimation of the transcendent honour conferred on me by the unanimous resolution of the whole body of the East India Company, that my first emotion was to offer up my thankful acknowledgments to the Almighty Power which has preserved my life beyond the ordinary limits of human nature, to receive a distinction of which history affords so few, if any, examples. Three years have elapsed since this great and powerful body conferred on me a signal mark, not only of honour, but of generous and affectionate consideration. The wisdom of that

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 429.

great body does not deem the value of public service to be diminished by the lapse of time ; it is for weak, low, and frivolous minds, incapable themselves of any great action, to take so narrow a view of public merit. True wisdom will ever view time as the best test of public services, and will apportion its rewards accordingly. I therefore consider the former act of the East India Company as greatly enhanced in value by the deliberation which preceded it. The present consummation of their justice and wisdom is marked by the same spirit of deliberation, reflecting equal honour on those who confer and on him who receives this high and glorious reward. At my advanced age, when my public career must be so near its close, it would be vain to offer any other return of gratitude than the cordial acknowledgment of my deep sense of the magnitude and value of this unparalleled reward. May my example of success, and of ultimate reward, encourage and inspire all the servants of the East India Company to manifest similar zeal and devotion in the service of the Company, and of the British Empire in the East, and may their continued efforts preserve and improve to the end of time the interest of that great charge so long entrusted to my hands.

THE DUKE OF WELLINGTON[1] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

London : March 20, 1841

I have received upon my return home this night

[1] For many years the brothers had been estranged, but a reconciliation had been effected in 1838.

your note respecting the picture,[1] and I am happy to learn that it has reached you in safety, and that you are satisfied with it, and that it has recalled to your mind the transactions of the days in which it was painted. I trust in God that you will long live to enjoy those feelings, but I am much obliged by the disposition which you propose to make of this picture.

I have likewise just now received your note with the report of the proceeding in the Court of Proprietors of the East India Company on the resolution of the Court of Directors in relation to their last mark of respect for and justice towards yourself. I had before read the report in the newspapers of what had passed in the Court of Proprietors, and I was much gratified.

But that which (next to the satisfaction which I felt that justice had been done to you without a dissenting voice) pleased me most was your answer to the Chairman and Deputy Chairman. It is inimitable. Nobody could write such a letter but yourself in these times. It states in the most beautiful language the principles on which such transactions ought to be governed, and in which they ought to be viewed. It must make an impression beneficial to the public interests upon the Government and the public, and I am delighted that you have availed yourself of the opportunity of stating the real ground on which all transactions of this description are founded,

[1] Probably the portrait of Wellesley, attributed to Gainsborough Dupont, painted before he went to India, which now hangs in Apsley House.

and of the view which ought to be taken of them.[1]

SIR ROBERT PEEL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Whitehall: March 25, 1841

I thank you sincerely for the justice you have done me by presuming that I should hear with cordial satisfaction that it has been resolved, at a General Court of the East India Company, permanently to record their grateful sense of your pre-eminent services in India.

I thank you, too, for having enhanced the pleasure which this intelligence could not fail to give me by the kind and flattering manner in which you have communicated it.

True fame, like punishment, pursues its object *pede claudo*. I rejoice that it has overtaken you before your public career has closed, and while you can give such a proof as your letter of the 18th supplies, that your spirit is undecayed and that your faculties are unimpaired by age.[2]

SIR ROBERT PEEL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

May 25, 1841

I am exceedingly gratified by the assurance which you have had the goodness to convey to me, that the course which I am pursuing in this arduous crisis of public affairs[3] meets with your

[1] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 466.

[2] Add. MSS. 37312 f. 474.

[3] The ministerial crisis was brought about by a question of finance. It was clear that there would be a deficit in the financial year, 1841-1842, and the Government was defeated on the remedies they proposed. Parliament was dissolved on

approbation, and that you are prepared to encourage and support me by a public demonstration of your confidence.

My respect and esteem for you have never varied with the occasional changes that have taken place in party combinations, and I am proud to think that my separation from you in politics arose rather out of the personal obligations of honour which party connection imposes, than any material differences as to the principles on which the Government of this country should be connected.

The authority of your name, and the assurance of your approbation, will powerfully aid and animate me in the performance of my public duty, and I entirely concur with you in the propriety of placing your proxy in the hands of the Duke of Wellington, for I know no other peer who is so worthy of being entrusted with such a deposit.[1]

SIR ROBERT PEEL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Drayton Manor: June 27, 1841

I was about to take the *first* opportunity which the relaxation of Parliamentary labours offered me, of calling upon you, and enjoying the satisfaction of personal intercourse with you, when I was suddenly called away from London by the announcement of an opponent at Tamworth.

I have been busily engaged for the last three or

June 23, 1841, and when the new House of Commons assembled on August 19, Melbourne, who was in a minority, resigned. Peel then became Prime Minister, and formed his second administration.

[1] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 38.

four days in all the pleasures of canvassing, and write these few lines in the interval between canvass and nomination.

The opposition will only give *me* a little trouble, and will not endanger the seat of my late colleague (Captain A'Court).

Immediately on my return to London I will present myself at Kingston House.

I cannot understand the object of the Government in superseding Lord Plunket and appointing *Lord* Campbell, under the circumstances under which the official arrangement has been made.[1] Lord Plunket is dissatisfied, the Irish Bar incensed, and Campbell, it seems, is to retire, if retirement be his lot, unpensioned.

I heard last year of a joke of Lord Plunket's, which proves that the coming Chancellor had cast his shadow before. After a tremendously stormy night Lord Plunket said to his secretary, "I hope John Campbell was on board the packet for England." "Why?" said the secretary. "Because he must have *thrown up* the seals."

I am surprised that Lord Plunket did not persist in withholding resignation, and in positively refusing to be a party to what he considers an indignity to the Bar of Ireland. If, refusing voluntary resignation, he had been dismissed by an

[1] As early as 1839 it was rumoured that Plunket, who since 1830 had been Lord Chancellor of Ireland, was to be replaced by Sir John Campbell, the English Attorney-General. There was much negotiation about the matter, and in the end, on June 17, 1841, Plunket retired and was succeeded by Campbell, who was raised to the peerage. Campbell held the post until 1850, when he was appointed Chief Justice of the Queen's Bench. He became Lord Chancellor of England in 1859.

act of authority, I should have envied him his loss of office under such circumstances.[1]

EARL DE GREY [2] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

St. James's Square: September 11, 1841

My brother has communicated to me your Lordship's letter, and the printed copy of your speech. I feel highly flattered at the opinion you are pleased to express respecting myself, which carries with it additional weight as coming from one whose general qualification to form a judgment is supported by the personal experience derived from your official residence in that country over which I am now placed.

I go there with a hope, and, I may say, a confidence, that I shall meet with support and kindly feeling from those who feel that tranquillity is valuable. I must be prepared to experience resistance and obloquy from those whose trade is agitation; but I cannot divest myself of the belief that they are diminishing in number.

The Irish have always appeared to me to be a people easily managed by kindness and justice. As soldiers, sailors, and labouring peasantry, they are frank, confiding, and generous. Too easily led, perhaps, by designing men, but always keenly alive to a sense of what they deem just. Mercy, if allowed to assume the character of weakness, is easily seen through by their quick perception; and

[1] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 46.

[2] Thomas Philip de Grey, Earl de Grey (1781-1859), Viceroy of Ireland, 1841-1844.

vigour, if strained beyond due bounds, is easily represented to them as severity. But I cannot help hoping that an honest, straightforward determination to act upon principle instead of feeling, to do justice to all sects and parties without distinction, to be swayed neither by fear nor favour, must be appreciated; and as I shall go there with the will, if not the ability, to conduct myself upon those principles only, I trust I may not be unsuccessful.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* EARL DE GREY

Kingston House, Knightsbridge
September 12, 1841

Your Excellency's obliging letter has strongly confirmed those sentiments of satisfaction and confident expectation with which I hailed your appointment to the Government of Ireland as a blessing to that country, to the British Empire, and, I may add, to the cause of order, liberty, justice, and religion throughout the civilised world.

An honest, straightforward determination to act upon principle instead of feeling, to do justice to all sects and parties without distinction, to be swayed neither by fear nor favour, contains the foundations of a system of government which cannot fail to conciliate the support of every honest heart.

Such a system will also afford the best protection against that evil spirit which for some time past has infested that country now happily committed to your charge.

[1] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 62.

It is perfectly true that the original national character of the people of Ireland was "frank, confiding, and generous"; but what nation could retain that noble character unpolluted when subjected to the ruinous operation of those disorders by which Ireland has been afflicted?

First, the insidious and indomitable (to the present hour) agitations of the most laborious, artful, and bold array of demagogues which ever disturbed the peace of mankind; secondly, the machinations of a priesthood, perverting all the sacraments of religion to the service of sedition and treason and to the purposes of those demagogues; and thirdly (*proh pudor!*) a Ministry wielding the sceptre against the crown, making war upon the monarchy and the Empire with the influence and power of both, rendering the royal name and strength an instrument of rebellion, and the royal prerogatives a shelter for murder and massacre. What innate strength of virtue in a nation could long withstand such a combination of assailing evils, where the Government itself was perverted into an engine of disorder, and law protected crime, and religion encouraged and pardoned the highest offences against God and man?

This I know is not an exaggerated view of the condition of that people which you are sent, I trust, to save. With you, I hope that you are not too late to accomplish this glorious work, and I hope materials still exist to be wrought by your hand into a noble fabric of peace and prosperity. The wishes of all good men are with you. Your principles are all sound and pure; may God

prosper you, is the sincere prayer and expectation of your faithful servant.[1]

The Marquess Wellesley *to* Alfred Montgomery

Kingston House: October 23, 1841

I was much amused by your two letters.

Poor dear old East Cliff. It is twenty-five years since I left it for Richmond (1816). What scenes I have gone through since that date! Pray go and look at it all over, and see whether my trees have grown, for I planted largely. I do not know what has been done to the house.

I was highly amused with your account of Deal, etc. The Irish story is admirable. I grieve for poor Lady Clarendon; she is one of the best of women. I suppose Rosa gets some *dew* among you all; I never saw her. I continue to get better, and I am to see Chambers again to-day, but I don't think he will persuade me to take his prussic acid draught.

The papers say O'Connell will certainly be Lord Mayor of Dublin.[2] What enormous wickedness of Melbourne and Co.! I hope Lord de Grey will knight him.

Tell Arthur that I desired you to enquire particularly about his health, and that I mean in a few days to send him one of my books, with the last edition, containing some lines on *His Civic Statue*.[3]

[1] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 64.

[2] O'Connell was elected Lord Mayor of Dublin on November 1, 1841, being the first Catholic to occupy that position since the reign of James II.

[3] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 115.

LORD ELLENBOROUGH[1] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

India Board: October 23, 1841

I cannot proceed to India as Governor-General without soliciting the honour of waiting upon your Lordship.

There is more than one point upon which I am most desirous of having the benefit of your enlightened judgment, and I am sure that, should it be inconvenient to your Lordship to receive me, you will yet excuse the liberty I take in requesting an interview, attributing my doing so to the real cause—an earnest wish to serve the country which your Lordship preserved.

I am entirely at your Lordship's disposal at any hour on any day during the ensuing week.

I leave London for India on the 4th of November.[2]

GEORGE LYALL[3] *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

East India House: December 17, 1841

In consequence of the lamented death of Sir F. Chantrey it has become necessary for us to take some further steps towards accomplishing the resolution of the General Court regarding the statue of your Lordship.

[1] Edward Law, second Baron Ellenborough (1790-1871), appointed Governor-General of India, 1841. He annexed Sind and subjugated Gwalior, but was recalled in 1844, in which year, however, he was created Earl of Ellenborough.

[2] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 99.

[3] George Lyall (d. 1853), M.P. for the City of London. In 1841 he was Chairman of the East India Company.

Mr. Weekes,[1] who, I believe, possessed the confidence of Sir Francis Chantrey as his assistant, is very desirous of being entrusted with the work, and has, I hear, communicated with your Lordship respecting it; but before I give him any encouragement I am anxious to have the benefit of your Lordship's opinion and judgment.

My only wish is that the artist should be employed who may appear more capable of executing the work in a manner worthy of its subject, and I should wish to be entirely guided by your Lordship in making the selection.

In the event of your wishing to see the Deputy Chairman and myself, previously, we will do ourselves the pleasure of waiting upon your Lordship whenever you may be pleased to appoint.[2]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* GEORGE LYALL

Kingston House: December 20, 1841

Pray accept my warmest thanks for your very kind letter of the 17th, which could have been returned sooner, had I not been afflicted with a severe bilious attack, which disabled me from writing.

The death of Sir F. Chantrey is a most lamentable event. I had seen him more than once on the subject of the high honour conferred on me by my worthy masters (the East India Company, who must for ever be the first object of my affection, respect, and gratitude). We agreed that the statue should represent me *as I was* when, under

[1] Henry Weekes (1807-1877), sculptor.

[2] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 113.

the blessing of God Almighty, I was enabled to save, establish, and greatly augment the British Empire in India; and, therefore, that the bust taken by Nollekens in 1809, and the picture by Lawrence in 1812, should be consulted for the head of figure. This was done, and Sir Francis has fully communicated with his assistant, Mr. Weekes, on the whole matter. It is my duty to leave the choice of the sculptor entirely to you and the Court of Directors, and I informed Mr. Weekes of my determination accordingly; but I added that, if I should be consulted, I should undoubtedly recommend Mr. Weekes, as the person possessing Sir Francis Chantrey's confidence and apprised of his intentions. As the work will principally be formed with reference to the bust and picture which I have named, I have no hesitation in submitting my opinion, that Mr. Weekes is the most likely to execute it with success, and I shall be happy to give every assistance in my power to forward its completion.

I cannot conclude this letter without again expressing my high sense of the noble manner in which you and the Deputy Chairman (my highly esteemed friend, Sir James Lushington), and indeed the whole Court of Directors, have carried into effect the resolution of the Court of Proprietors. You have added fresh lustre and grace to this signal act of deliberate justice and well-considered honour. May your wisdom and public spirit produce its congenial effects on the public service, and afford a great example to animate the whole body of your servants in India!

The Crown has not kept pace with the generosity of the Company, but has left the salvation of a great empire, together with the firm establishment and augmentation of its vast power, dominion, and unbounded resources, almost without a record in the peerage and honours of the country; and he who has saved the former, and founded a new empire in the East, takes rank in the British peerage with the captor of the Fort of Ghuznee.[1]

THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY *to* ALFRED MONTGOMERY

Kingston House: [*March* 20, 1842]

I continue very ill. I was out of bed almost the whole of last night in a most painful fit of the cramp, but Smith continues to think me in no danger. I suffer, however, most dreadfully. I hope to hear better accounts of you.

Was there ever anything so strange and shocking as Lord Munster's[2] suicide?[3]

LORD BROUGHAM *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Private *Brougham: August* 29, 1842

I return you in another cover with many thanks your most interesting paper, which has not been out of my hands since I received it. Accept my best thanks also for the "Soda," which is excellent, and (*uti decet*) *merum soli.*

[1] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 117.

[2] George Augustus FitzClarence, first Earl of Munster (1794-1842), the eldest son of William IV. by Mrs. Jordan, committed suicide by shooting himself on March 20, 1842. It is said that his mind was affected by suppressed gout.

[3] Add. MSS. 37316 f. 124.

I am in hopes of Alfred [Montgomery] being soon able to send me a good report of your amendment. But the extreme heat being accompanied with cool mornings, you ought to be on your guard against *chills*. In consequence of these, cholera has been prevalent of late.

The disturbances[1] seem to be over generally, and the Government have treated them with much wisdom; that is, with due forbearance and firmness combined. There never was for a moment the least risk of anything beyond a *jacquerie*, but that might have been very distressing.

I suppose there never was a party more reduced to insignificance than our friends the Whigs now are. They are so low that every one seems ashamed of them, and denies them. The puffing of Palmerston's speech[2] will serve them very little. But it is difficult to name that author of all the bad (or nearly all the bad) feeling of late prevailing in France, without being thankful to observe the fortunate appearances which now exist of it wearing away. Thiers has done himself much credit by his late allusion to the subject.[3]

SIR ROBERT PEEL *to* THE MARQUESS WELLESLEY

Whitehall: September 3 [1842]

Of the thousand letters which I have received since my entrance on this arduous task[4] which has

[1] The Chartist riots.

[2] Speech in the House of Commons, August 10, on the public Bills of the Session.

[3] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 190.

[4] Peel had been Prime Minister since August 1841. In 1842 he introduced his first budget and began his task of lightening the burden of indirect taxation.

been committed to me, I have received none which has given me more cordial satisfaction than that which you have had the goodness to address to me.

I feel increased confidence in the efficiency and trustworthiness of the arrangements which I have made for the conduct of public affairs, since you have expressed your general approbation of them.

Excuse this hasty and imperfect acknowledgment of my obligations to you for the warm expressions of your personal esteem and hearty good wishes for my success.[1]

On September 26, 1842, after a long course of ill-health, Wellesley passed away at Kingston House, Brompton, and a few days later his mortal remains were, in accordance with his wish, interred in the chapel of Eton College. He was in his eighty-third year, but his faculties were unimpaired, and to the end he found pleasure in books and in writing. Much of the bitterness he felt had been removed by the recognition, so long delayed, of the East India Company of the value of the services which he, when Governor-General of India, had rendered to his country; but it remained always a sore point with him that he was never granted rank higher than that of a Marquess in the Irish peerage. He had his faults, but, in spite of them, he was a great man, and straightforward, honest, and fearless.

[1] Add. MSS. 37313 f. 192.

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